THE QUICKENING

BY

FRANCIS LYNDE

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CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

She looked up at him appealingly.

"Don't make fun of such things, Tom. Love is sacred."

"I was never further from making fun of things in my life. I mean it with every drop of blood in me. You said you didn't want to find me changed; I'm not changed in that, at least."

"You ridiculous boy!" she said; but that was only a stop-gap, and Longfellow added another by coming to a stand opposite a vast obstruction of building material half damming the white road. "What are you doing here—building more additions?" she asked.

"No," said Tom. "It is a new plant—a pipe foundry."

"Don't tell me we are going to have more neighbors in Paradise," she said, in mock concern.

"I'll tell you something that may shock you worse than that: the owner of this new plant has camped down right next door to Deer Trace."

"How dreadful! You don't mean that!"

"Oh, but I do. He's a young man, of poor but honest parentage, with a large eye for the main chance. I shouldn't be surprised if he took every opportunity to make love to you."

"How absurd you can be, Tom! Who is he?"

"He is Mr. Caleb Gordon's son. I think you think you know hom, but you don't; nobody does."

"Really, Tom? Have you gone into business for yourself? I thought you had another year at Boston."

"I have another year coming to me, but I don't know when I shall get it. And I am in business for myself; though perhaps I should be modest and call it a firm—Gordon & Gordon. I built this new firm, and it is all that has kept Chiawassee from going into the sheriff's hands any time during the past six months. Duxbury Farley and his son had deliberately wrecked the company."

"You must not say such things of Mr. Farley and—and his son to me. If you do, I can't listen."

"You don't believe what I say?"

"I believe you have convinced yourself. But you are vindictive; you know you are. And I mean to be fair and just."

"Tell me one thing, Ardea, and maybe it will shut my mouth. What is Vincent Farley to you—anything more than Eva's brother?"

Another young woman might have claimed her undoubted right to evade such a pointed question. But Ardea saw safety only in instant frankness.

"He has asked me to be his wife, Tom."

"And you have consented?"

"I wonder if I have," she said, half-musingly.

"Don't you know?" he demanded. And then, "Ardea, I'd rather see you dead and in your coffin! You don't know Vint Farley."

"Don't I? My opportunities have been very much better than yours," she retorted.

"That may be, but I say you don't know him. He is a whited sepulcher."

"But you can not particularize," she insisted. "And the evidence is all the other way."

"The evidence isn't all one-sided," he asserted. "If you were a man, I could convince you in two minutes that both of the Farleys are rascals and hypocrites."

"Yet they are your father's business associates," she reminded him.

He saw the hopelessness of any argument on that side, and was silent again, this time until they had passed the Deer Trace gates and he had cut the buggy before the great Greek-pillared portico of the manor-house. When he had helped her out, she thanked him and gave him her hand quite in the old way; and he held it while he asked a single blunt question.

"Tell me one thing more, Ardea: do you love Vincent Farley?"

Her swift blush answered him, and he did not wait for her word.

"That settles is; you needn't say it in so many words. I love you—love you as this man never will, never could. And with half his chance, I could have made you love me."

"Don't Tom! please don't," she begged, trying to free her hand.

"I must, for this once; then we'll quit and go back to the former things. You said a while ago that I was vindictive; I'll show you that I am not. When the time comes for me to put my foot on Vint Farley's neck, I'm going to spare him for your sake. Then you'll know what it means to have a man's love. Good-by; I'm coming over for a few minutes this evening if you'll let me."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Brother Japheth had concluded some business at the new foundry and the architect who was building the latest extension to the pipe-pit floor was heading across the yard to consult the young boss. Pettigrass paused with his foot in the stirrup to say, "Old Tike Bryerson's on the rampage ag'in; folks up at the valley head say he's a-lookin' for you, Tom-Jeff."

"For me?" said Tom; then he laughed easily. "I don't owe him anything, and I'm not very hard to find. What's the matter?"

He thought it a little singular at the time that Japheth gave him a curious look and mounted and rode away without answering his question. But the building activities were clamoring for time and attention, and his father was waiting to consult him about a run of iron that was not quite up to the pipe-making test requirements. So he forgot Japheth's half-accusing glance at parting, and the implied warning that had preceded it, until an incident at the day's end reminded him of both.

The incident turned on the fact of his walking home. Ordinarily he struck work when the furnace whistle blew, riding home with his father behind old Longfellow; but on this particular evening Kinderling, the architect, missed his South Tredegar train, and Tom spent an extra hour with him, discussing further and future possibilities of expansion. Kinderling got away on a later train, and Tom closed his office and took the long mile up the pike afoot in the dusk of the autumn evening, thinking pointedly of many things mechanical and industrial, and never by any chance forereaching to the epoch-marking event that was awaiting him at the Woodlawn gate.

His hand was upon the latch of the ornamental side wicket opening on the home foot-path when a woman, crouching in the shadow of the great-gate pillar, rose suddenly and stood before him. He did not recognize her at first; it was nearly dark, and her head was snooded in a shawl. Then she spoke, and he saw that it was Nancy Bryerson—a Nan sadly and terribly changed, but must much of the wild-creature of face and form still remaining.

"You done forgot me, Tom-Jeff?" she asked; and than, at his start of recognition: "I allow I have changed some."

"Surely I haven't forgotten you, Nan. But you took me by surprise; and I can't see in the dark any better than most people. What are you doing down here in the valley so late in the evening?" He tried to say it superiorly, paternally, as an older man might have said it

"You allow it ain't fittin' for me to be out alone after night?" she, with a hard little laugh. "I reckon it ain't goin' to hurt me none; anyways, I had to come. Paw's been red-eyed for a week, and he's huntin' for you, Tom-Jeff."

"Hunting for me? Well, I'm not very hard to find," he said, unconsciously repeating the answer he had made to the horse-trader's warning.

"Couldn't you make out to go off somewheres for a little spell?" she asked, half-pleadingly.

"Run away, you mean? Hardly; I'm too busy just at present. Besides, I haven't any quarrel with your father. what's he making trouble about now?"

She put her face in her hands, and though she was silent, he could see that sobs were shaking her. Being neither more nor less than a man, her tears made him foolish. He put his arm around her and tried to find the comforting word.

How Ardea and Miss Euphrasia, going the roundabout way from one house to the other to avoid the dew-wet grass of the lawns, came fairly within arm's-reach before he saw or heard them, remained a thing inexplicable. But when he looked up they were there, Miss Euphrasia straightening herself aloof in virtuous disapproval, and Ardea looking as if some one had suddenly shown her the head of Medusa.

Tom separated himself from Nan in hot-hearted confusion and stood as a culprit taken in the act. Nan hid her face again and turned away. It was Miss Dabney the younger who found words to break the smarting silence.

"Don't mind us, Mr. Gordon," she said, icily. "We were going to Woodlawn to see if your father and mother could come over after dinner."

Tom smote himself alive and made haste to open the foot-path gate for them. There was nothing more said, or to be said; but when they were gone and he was once more alone with Nan, he was fighting desperately with a very manlike desire to smash something; to relieve the wrathful pressure by hurting somebody.

"You were going to tell me about your father," he said, striving to hold the interruption as if it had not been, and yet tingling in every nerve to be free. "Did you come all the way down the mountain to warn me?"

"I had to come anyway. He run me out, paw did."

"Heavens!" ejaculated Tom, prickling now with a new sensation. "And you haven't any place to stay?"

She shook her head.

"No. I was allowin' maybe your paw'd let me sleep where you-uns keep the hawsses—jest for a little spell till I could make out what-all I'm goin' to do."

He was too rageful to be quite clear-sighted. Yet he conceived that he had a duty laid on him. Once in the foolish, infatuated long-ago he had told her he would take care of her; he remembered it; doubtless she was remembering it, too. But her suggestion was not to be considered for a moment.

"I can't let you go to the stables," he objected. "The horse-boys sleep there. But I'll put a roof over you, some way. Wait here a minute till I come back."

His thought was to go to his mother and ask her help; but half-way to the house his courage failed him. Since the breach in spiritual confidence he had been better able to see the lovable side of his mother's faith; but he could not be blind to that quality of hardness in it which, even in such chastened souls as Martha Gordon's, finds expression in woman's inhumanity to woman. Besides, Ardea and her cousin were still in the way.

He swung on his heel undecided. On the hillside back of the new foundry there was a one-roomed cabin built on the Gordon land years before by a hermit watchman of the Chiawassee plant. It was vacant, and Tom remembered that the few bits of furniture had not been removed when the old watchman died. Would the miserable shack do for a temporary refuge for the outcast? He concluded it would have to do; and, making a wide circuit of the house, he went around to the stables to harness Longfellow to the buggy. Luckily, the negroes were all in the detached kitchen, eating their supper, so he was able to go and come undetected.

When he drove down to the gate he found Nan waiting where he had left her; but now she had a bundle in her arms. As he got out to swing the driveway grille, the house door opened; a flood of light from the hall lamp banded the lawn, and there were voices and footsteps on the veranda. He flung a nervous glance over his shoulder; Ardea and her cousin were returning down the foot-path. Wherefore he made haste, meaning not to be caught again, if he could help it. But the fates were against him. Longfellow, snatched ruthlessly from his half-emptied oat box, made equine protest, yawing and veering and earning himself a savage cut of the whip before he consented to place the buggy at the stone mounting-step.

"Quick!" said Tom, flinging the reins on the dashboard. Chuck your bundle under the seat and climb in!"

But Nan was provokingly slow, and when she tried to get in with the bundle still in her arms, the buggy hood was in the way. Tom had to help her, was in the act of lifting her to the step, when the wicket latch clicked and Ardea and Miss Euphrasia came out. They passed on without comment, but Tom could feel the electric shock of righteous scorn through the back of his head. That was why he drove halfway to the lower end of the pike before he turned on Nan to say:

"What's in that bundle you're so careful of? Why don't you put it under the seat?"

"I reckon you wouldn't want me to do that, Tom-Jeff," she answered, simply. "Hit's my baby—my little Tom."

He was struck dumb. It often happens that in the fiercest storm of gossip the one most nearly concerned goes his way without so much as suspecting that the sun is hidden. But Tom had not been exposed to the violence of the storm. Nan's shame was old, and the gossip tongues had wagged themselves weary two years before, when the child was born. So Tom was quite free to think only of his companion. A great anger rose and swelled in his heart. What scoundrel had taken advantage of an ignorance so profound as to be the blood sister of innocence? He would have given much to know; and yet the true delicacy of a manly soul made him hold his peace.

Thus it befell that they drove in silence to the deserted cabin on the hillside; and Tom went down to the foundry office and brought a lamp for light. The cabin was a mere shelter; but when he would have made excuses, Nan stopped him.

"Hit's as good as I been usen to, as you know mighty well, Tom-Jeff. I on'y wisht——"

He was on his knees at the hearth, kindling a fire, and he looked up to see why she did not finish She was sitting on the edge of the old watchman's rude bed ,bowed low over the sleeping child, and again sobs were shaking her like an ague fit. There was something heartrending in this silent, wordless anguish; but there was nothing to be said, and Tom went on making the fire. After a little she sat up and continued monotonously:

"He was liken to me thataway, too; the Man 'at I heard your Uncle Silas tellin' about one night when I sot on the doorstep at Little Zoar—He hadn't no place to lay His'n head; not so much as the red foxes 'r the birds * * * and I hain't."

The blaze was racing up the chimney now with a cheerful roar, and Tom rose to his feet, every good emotion in him stirring to its awakening.

"Such as it is, Nan, this place is yours, for as long as you want to stay," he said, soberly. And then: "You straighten things around here to suit you, and I'll be back in a little while."

He was gone less than half an hour, but in that shore interval he lighted another fire: a blaze of curiosity and comment to tingle the ears and loosen the tongues of the circle of loungers in Hargis' store in Gordonia. He ignored the stove-hugging contingent pointedly while he was giving his curt orders to the storekeeper; and the contingent avenged itself when he was out of hearing.

"Te-hee!" chuckled Simeon Cantrell the elder, pursing his lips around the stem of his corn-cob pipe; "looks like Tom-Jeff was goin' to house-keepin' righ' late in the evenin'."

"By gol, I wonder what's doin'?" said another. "Reckon he's done tuk up with Nan Bryerson, afte' all's been said an' done?"

(To be continued.)

Hopeful Sign.

That the war on tuberculosis pays immediate dividends in human life is proved by a report of Dr. Bosley, health commissioner of Baltimore. In the monthly health bulletin for July it is shown that the number of deaths from tuberculosis occurring in the city was 92, as compared wtih 123 for the same month last year. Dr. Bosley says that he attributes the decrease in the number of deaths to the educational campaign that those interested in the fight against the "white plague" are making. "The interest of the public has been aroused," he declares, "and there is a general tendency on the part of the people to heed the warnings and to observe the hygienic rules being promulgated." In ten years, if the present progress is kept up, Dr. Bosley believes that tuberculosis will be stamped out.

Haakon Follows the Hounds.

King Haakon of Norway is fond of telling his first appearance with his regiment, when he headed it at parade. It was the King's Own Norfolk Yeomanry.

"I was horribly nervous," he says. "I am not what might be called a 'crack rider,' and I had seen the yeomanry on parade and in many cases following the hounds. My word, but they ride like the wind and look as if they could easily go up a church steeple if they got the order or the hounds showed them the way. I felt as I rode along at their head that every man was inwardly criticising my style and setting me down as a hopeless duffer. It was a horrible experience and I never want to go through it again."

Perhaps a bulldog gets but little sympathy because he doesn't need it.

For the Hostess

Chat on Interesting Topics of Many Kinds, by a Recognized Authority

A Chrysanthemum Luncheon.

Judging from the numerous letters from brides-elect, Cupid must have been unusually busy with his little bow and arrow. There are so many requests for pre-nuptial functions, I am sure the description of this chrysanthemum luncheon will be very acceptable.

It was gorgeously brilliant, the color scheme being yellow; especially fitting for this month as November claims the topaz and the chrysanthemum; in this instance it was also the bride's birthday month as well as her wedding day season. For a centerpiece there was a mound of yellow "mums," kept in place by embedding the stems in sand. At each place there was a little yellow jardiniere containing one stiff, straight little yellow "mum" to which the name card was attached with a yellow ribbon. The grape fruit cock-tail had a wee "mum" in the center of the fruit; around the stem of the glass there was a fluffy bow of white tulle. The plates on which the frappe glasses stood had a wreath of yellow "mums" around them and the ice-cream was in boxes concealed by petals of yellow crepe paper "mums." The candle sticks were of silver and had yellow shades. At each place were yellow slippers filled with salted nuts. Just the bridal party were included in the guests, I mean the girls in the party and two matrons of honor.

A Box Shower.

A jolly crowd wishing to "shower" one of their number who was about to leave the state of single blessedness, conceived the bright idea of giving a box shower. The boys were in on it too, and they had loads of fun. All the gifts were in boxes, which in turn were put in a huge dry goods box covered with white paper cambric on which hearts of red, large and small were pasted. When all had arrived, the bell rang and the village expressman appeared and said he had a small parcel for Miss B—— and imagine the surprise when he entered with the assistance of several of the masculine guests bearing the immense box. The honored couple were told they could unpack, but each package was to be shown, the card read and speech made before the next box was opened.

Among the articles were boxes of paper, box of matches, box of tacks, box of soap, of thread, of pins, work box, glove and handkerchief box, stamp box, tool box and a nest of boxes ending with a wee pill box which contained a collar button; box of tin kitchen utensils, box of paper napkins, box of labels, etc. When it came to serving refreshments the hostess had a dainty luncheon put up in pasteboard boxes covered with rose wall paper, a box for each couple, coffee and ice cream completed the repast. There were salted almonds and bon-bons in pretty heart shaped boxes bearing the monogram of the bride and groom elect, which the guests retained as souvenirs.

A Neck-Tie and Apron Party.

This really is an old time stunt, but like many other old things has been rejuvenated. The hostess prepares as many cheese cloth aprons as there are men and as many pieces of silk or ribbon as there are girls. When all arrive the men are given spools of thread and told to find the girl who has an apron to match it. In this way partners are chosen and the girls put on the aprons after the men have sewed the hems and sewed on the strings. Allow half or three-quarters of an hour for this. Next the girls are given the necktie pieces and they are gathered together and put through a door, each girl having hold of an end, the door is closed and the men are to come in and take hold of an end. When each man has an end, the door is opened and the girl who has hold of the other end must fashion a necktie for her swain. The latter puts it on and the girl puts on her apron, and thus partners are selected for supper or refreshments. This is a very jolly party, adapted to private parties or for a church social.

MADAME MERRI.

To Clean a Black Skirt.

To clean a black skirt, lay the skirt as flatly as possible on a clean table. Remove all grease spots with brown paper and a hot iron, then with a sponge dipped in strong coffee rub over the whole of the dress, paying special attention to the front and edge of the skirt. When the whole of the skirt has been sponged and is still damp, iron on the wrong side until perfectly dry.

FANCIES OF FASHION

All-black hats are seen in satin, velvets, brocade, hatter's plush, velours, beaver, beaver cloth.

More dress hats are in all-black or black-and-white with a touch of metal or color than in any other shade.

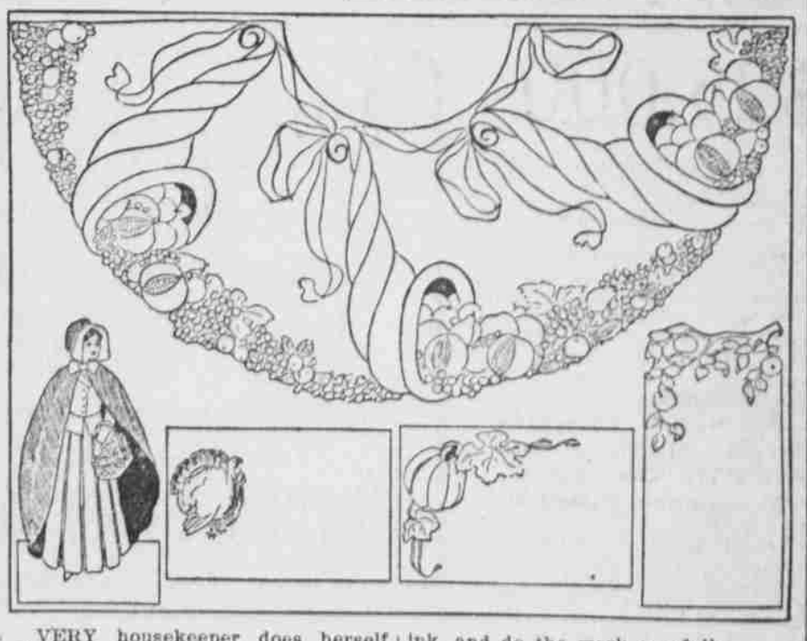
Ostrich feathers, willow plumes especially, are much in demand. Shaded and two-tone effects lead in favor.

Brimmed turbans are seen, with upright brims almost as high as the hat itself and close to it except at the back.

Hat shapes are of three sorts—the large, wide-brimmed hat (the most popular, the clotche, or Charlotte Corday, and the turban.

As a variation on these there is the large hat with the mushroom brim in a wide variety of shapes, all generally following the mushroom type.

For Thanksgiving



EVERY housekeeper does herself proud in getting up the Thanksgiving dinner. Besides the snowy linen, sparkling silver and glass, and savory dishes, some decoration is needed to make the festive occasion quite complete.

These decorations are no small item of expense if purchased in the art shops where hand work brings its price. Any woman or girl may, however, make her own decorations at very small expense and in a short time.

We are giving today several designs which work out attractively in color.

The candle shade, representing the horn of plenty, always in evidence in Thanksgiving decorations, is to be traced on thin water-color paper by means of carbon paper, and tinted in water-color. The horn is to be purple—not too dark—the ribbons green, and the fruit of the gay richness of the natural color. The inside of the horn may be tinted dark green.

To add to the effect when lighted, put a bright bit of color on the wrong side of the shade under any gay colored fruit, such as orange or apples. Leave a little seam on each end of the shade and fasten with brass brods. The edge is cut out irregularly around the fruit. When the painting is done go over all lines with waterproof black ink, and do the work carefully.

Four place cards are given, one a demure Puritan maiden to be colored in light gray gown, darker gray cape with bright red lining, cap to match the cape with a white facing and tie and kerchief—which just shows a little in front.

Paint the face and hands in the natural color. Red and yellow, if properly mixed, will give a satisfactory flesh color for beginners.

The lines in all the cards should be gone over with a pen and ink outline.

The turkey is to be painted brown, light and dark shades, with a bit of red on the head, and outlined.

The pumpkin is a brilliant orange color with dark green leaves, and the apples shaded in light and dark red and green leaves, with brown stems.

The water-color cards may be bought by the dozen, or very stiff and heavy water-color paper may be used.

Those who do not already possess a box of water-color paints may secure a very excellent little box of a new make with all the necessary colors, for 50 cents. A five-cent Japanese brush, which comes to a very fine point, will answer all purposes for doing this work.

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Not Up-to-Date.

The historic town of Bladensburg, Md., had a good bit of fun poked at it by reason of its alleged sleepiness. For instance, the story is told that a Bladensburg merchant was dozing in his shop one day when a little boy came in with a pitcher and asked for a quart of milk. The merchant yawned, stretched himself, but opened his eyes, and then, in the most injured tone, said: "Gee whiz! Ain't there nobody that sells milk in this town but me?"

One Gleaning of Truth.

"I don't take much stock in the vegetarian propaganda," says the Philosopher of Folly, "but I will say that wild oats usually make good widows."

EARN AN ORCHARD

HOOD RIVER ORCHARD LAND for sale by owner; choice ten acres, miles from city, elevation about feet, almost level, red shot soil, acres six-year-old trees; balance state. Price $1,700, easy terms. reliable party will give work and caring for adjoining ten acres amount to apply on purchase price. dress P. O. Box 131, Portland, or A 5374.

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