



Race for a Wife

—BY—
HAWLEY SMART

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

"Look here, Nellie," said the squire, at length, "you can't imagine for one instant that I have any intention of coercing Maude on the point. Only give it a trial. Be reasonable. You say she cares for no one else at present. Let her see young Pearman, and like him, if she can. If not, there's an end of it; but if she could fancy him, it would be well for all of us. Ruin stares us in the face—this would avert it. She, poor girl, will be left but indifferently off should anything happen to me; this insures her position, and luxuries. I don't see why it shouldn't be," and Denison shot a keen glance at the pale face opposite.

"I will do what you would have me, Harold," returned his wife, quietly. "I don't think that I have ever seen Mr. Pearman, but I had formed such high hopes for Maude! I never crossed you yet; it is not likely I should begin now, when you're in such trouble. But, oh, I do wish Glinn could be saved in any other way!"

"You have been a good wife to me, Nellie dear," said the squire, as he rose, and pressed his lips to Mrs. Denison's fair cheek. "You don't see this in the right light, but you will when you think it over. Meanwhile, you will do what I want—eh?"

"I will tell Maude when you deem it necessary," returned the soft voice of his wife; "but, Harold, I can't think it right; though you know best."

"You have not thought it over as I have. Do so, and you will change your mind," said Denison, as he left his wife's boudoir.

Sadly mused the wife over her husband's communication. Quiet, undemonstrative woman as she was, yet Eleanor Denison had been brought up from her cradle a thorough believer in the dogma of caste, and even her gentle nature rebelled at the idea that a daughter of hers should wed the son of a low-born attorney. We know her passionate idolatry of Maude, surpassing even a mother's love. It is easy to picture the bitter tears she shed after that morning's interview. She was a woman naturally given to weeping.

No passionate storm of lamentation, but a gentle shower of mourning. As Harold Denison's wife she had had manifold opportunities of practicing her vocation, yet I doubt whether he ever felt saltier tears running down her cheeks than he did that bright spring afternoon.

CHAPTER VIII.

Seldom did eye rest on a prettier picture than was made by Bonnie Maude Denison this early April morning. The close-fitting French grey merino dress, with the plain linen collar and cuffs, set off her beautifully molded figure to perfection, while the cerise neck-ribbon just relieved and gives warmth to her somewhat neutral-tinted robe. Moreover, that she had just returned from a successful raid on the conservatory, a snow-white camellia and its blood-red sister coquettishly twisted in her glossy brown hair, sufficiently attested—those crown jewels of the floral world looking more in place now than when adorning their parent stems.

"Good morning, sweet mother mine," cried Maude, as Mrs. Denison entered the breakfast room. "Only look at the plunder I've brought you! I found old Judkins' flowers guarded this morning, and I gathered and plucked. Isn't that a bouquet, mamma, to greet you in April?"

"Yes, love—glorious. No need to tell me Judkins was away, or never would his pets have been despoiled in this wise."

"No, cross old thing! He thinks flowers were made only to look at on their stems, and not to wear or decorate rooms."

The entrance of Harold Denison here checked conversation. He nodded a careless "Good morning" to his daughter, and then plunged moodily into his correspondence. He found nothing there, apparently, to raise his spirits. At length, thrusting his letters into his pockets, he rose.

"Well," he said, "things look blacker and blacker. It's no use struggling; the sooner my scheme is tried, the better. Do what you promised yesterday. Delay is useless."

"But, Harold—" pleaded his wife, as the ever-ready tears rose to her eyes. "Don't be foolish. It's our only chance. Understand," he said, crossing over to his wife's chair, and lowering his voice so that his daughter could not catch his words—"just put it before her in a common sense way this morning. How can you tell she will object. She can do as she likes about it. I have no wish to coerce her in any way; but, mind, tell her the whole truth. It is only fair the proposal should be laid before her. I'll come up to your room after luncheon, and you can tell me how she takes it;" and, turning on his heel, Harold Denison left the room.

"What's the matter, my mother," said Maude, as she stole to Mrs. Denison's side, and, passing her arms round her neck, laid her fair, fresh young cheek against the pale, worn, troubled face. "More of these dreadful money miseries, I suppose; but don't look so tearful over it. Papa looks so gloomy, and you so sad, it's enough to frighten poor me. Even if he has lost some more money, I suppose we shall always have enough to

live upon; and if you and I, mother, can't have new dresses for ever so long, that's nothing to be very sad about."

I am afraid Maude Denison is displaying an ignorance of the world, and a disregard to the vanities and gewgaws thereof, that may seem a little high-strained; but recollect that she is but eighteen, that the Xminster was her first ball, and that, owing to her father's pride and straitened circumstances, she has lived a very secluded life.

Few were the strangers that came within the gates of Glinn of late years. Harold Denison scorned to entertain unless he could do so with all the old lavish profusion—that prodigal hospitality of former times which had entailed such bitterness in his present daily bread. His wife, naturally an extremely sensitive woman, shrunk also from mixing in society in a much more humble and modest way than she had been wont to do. She was not of the temperament to face the half-whispered comments and upraised eyebrows of her country neighbors: "Poor thing! I hear he has run through everything; even the carriage horses have to be put down." Remarks of this kind were past her endurance, and so it was that since she left school, some two years ago, Maude had led a very secluded life.

True, many an old friend of the Denisons had offered to take care of the girl to various gaieties in the county, even if they could not induce Mrs. Denison to come to their houses and chaperone her own daughter; but all such invitations had been met with a brief though courteous refusal. Poor lady, she had more than once pleaded in her darling's behalf; but, wrapped in his own selfish pride, Harold Denison said fiercely, he would be patronized by no one.

And so Maude grew up like some wild flower, though not "born to bloom and blush unseen." For are there not already two who would fain pluck the wild flower and gather it to their bosoms if they may?

Did Maude know she was handsome? Of course she did. She wanted no Xminster ball to tell her that. What girl over fifteen, in the most primitive of nations, having beauty, is unaware of it? If there are no looking glasses, are there not deep pelucid waters that will serve as such?—Nature's mirrors whereby to wreath wild flowers in the hair? Maidens of our advanced civilization may be haunted with misgivings. Given the face of an angel, can we tell how it may stand the "make-up" that fashion deems to have decreed in these days? How dark eyes and eyelashes will go with golden hair is, of course, an open question. I can fancy the nervousness of those dusky Indian belles till they have ascertained the effect of paint and pigments, and what anxious moments our remote ancestresses must have had when they first put on their wood!

Thus it came about that Maude Denison had been out but on very few occasions, and had it not been that her godmother, who having gold to bequeath, was too important a person to be trifled with, had insisted on bearing her off, she had never seen that memorable Xminster ball.

Twelve o'clock, and the sun shines brightly into Mrs. Denison's boudoir, throwing rich tints through Maude's brown tresses, and lighting up the pale face of her mother; that joyous, tearful, capricious, womanish April sun—so like a woman in its glowing strength, so like her, again, in its overclouded weakness! Poor Mrs. Denison is still pondering on how to begin the dread task her lord has set her. She knows that glozing phrase of "not wishing to coerce the girl's decision," is but the meanest mockery; she can look back upon that airy preface of "not that I wish to sway you, my dearest Eleanor," in so many cases, and remembers too well that whatever may have been her misgivings or dislikes, the program has generally been carried out in its original integrity. She has borne these things meekly. They concerned but herself; now they threaten her daughter. Weak woman as she is, she would fain stand at bay here. Still, though intuitively knowing that it was false, there is the specious reasoning of her husband's, that the thing ought to be submitted to Maude herself. Again the tendrils of her affections are twined round dear old Glinn; she feels that a bitter wrench it would be to say farewell to the old place. Above all, there is the strong will of that selfish husband, whom she still loves so dearly, under whose thrall her life has passed.

CHAPTER IX.

What slaves these weak women are to those miserable clay idols they have set up only to fall down before and worship! Adoration is the main part of a woman's love. How they still revere these worthless images, despite the daily proof they have as to what miserable potter's ware they are composed of. But they go on, even when bruised and beaten, still firmly believing in their old romantic ideal. Oh, yes, women will shut their eyes to many things sooner than give up that dream of their girlhood. They would sooner remain blind than awake to find themselves utterly bankrupt, and their account far overdrawn at Cupid and Company's. A woman will forgive the man she loves everything except inconstancy, and only cling the closer to him through crime or trouble. But there must never have gria-

en a doubt in her mind that she is not still sole mistress of his heart; and with all his faults, Harold Denison had never brought the tears to his wife's eyes in this wise.

But I am wandering far away from the mistress of Glinn, still musing on her unwelcome task. Like her, I am loth to begin, though the miserable story must be told, for the furtherance of this narrative. It is stealing the bloom of the girlhood of such a maiden as Maude when you first break to her that she is put up to auction as veritably as if she stood in the Constantinople slave market. The Turk has suppressed it; but in the West the trade goes on merrily, and Lord Penzance finds it quite as much as he can do to rectify the mistakes that occur from ignoring natural feeling in the contract matrimonial.

"Maude, dear," at last observes Mrs. Denison, "whom did you like best of all your partners at the Xminster ball?"

"Like best?" and Maude's great grey eyes opened wide as she uncoiled herself from the sofa upon which she lounged, intent on the latest novel Maude had furnished. "What makes you ask that, mother?"

"Never mind! Tell me."

"Well, I don't know; I never thought about it. Gus Brisden was nice, and Charlie Tollamache—he's a dragoon of some kind, you know—he was great fun, and valed very well. Then there was Mr. Handley, not very young, but I got on very well with him. I think, though, I liked dancing with Gren best; he can valse—and then we had such laughing over other people; but he got sulky towards the finish, I'm sure I don't know why. I'm very fond of Gren, you know, mother, but he bullies me and can be very nasty at times, and the finish of that ball happened to be one of those times. I don't know why," continued the girl, meditatively, "unless it was my dancing with that Mr. Pearman; what could that matter to him?"

"And did you and Gren part on bad terms?"

"No; I came down and gave him his coffee before he went away, and he kissed me—and so we parted friends."

I think, had I been Grenville Rose, I should have preferred Maude being a little more reticent about the kiss. Still, the slight hesitation in her speech, the slight flush that crossed her cheek as she alluded to it, were favorable signs to an astute observer. He had kissed her as his cousin all his life—why should the recollection make her blush and hesitate now? Young people situated in this way may like each other for years; the explosion of some aesthetic force suddenly awakes love. More often than not the train is lit through the precautions taken to prevent it. The doctrine of separation is in high favor among chaperones, but they often forget that when using it with a view to a contrary result.

"But you don't say anything about Mr. Pearman, Maude; did you like him?"

"Well, he was pleasant and amusing enough. I only had one quadrille with him, you know. But Gren scolded so about my dancing with him at all; and said he wasn't 'form,' or 'bad form,' or something or other—meaning, in short, that I ought not to have stood up with him. If he wasn't fit to be danced with, mother, why did they introduce him to me?" and Maude raised her pretty eyebrows, as if she had propounded a regular poser.

"I see no reason in the world. He is not one of the old county families, but his father is very rich, and he will take his place, ere many years are over, in the county. It depends, of course, a good deal upon how he marries. Suppose he fancied you, now, Maude—we are very poor, you know—what would you say to it?"

"I!—Mother, dear, what makes you ask such a question? I'm sure I don't know. Glinn is happy home enough for me at present. But I don't think, if I did marry, I should like there to be any doubt about my husband being a gentleman; and they—that is, I mean Gren—didn't seem to think he was."

"Gren, my dear, is prejudiced. Young Mr. Pearman has had an university education, and though his father was a nobody, he mixes, I'm told, with all the best people round."

"Well, it don't much matter; I'm never likely to be called on to decide. I think I'd rather not, if it was so. But you don't mean to say, mother, you are trying to fit me with a husband out of my ball partners! Oh, you scandalous match-making mamma!"—and Maude laughed merrily.

"But suppose I was, whom would you choose?"

"Oh, dear, none of them. If it came to the worst, I should say I was engaged to Gren."

"My dear Maude!"

"No; dear Maude never had the chance yet; he never asked her, and I don't think it at all likely he ever will. But I tell you what, mother, if I really was in such a quandary, I think I should ask him. I could tell him afterwards, you know, it was only to get myself out of a scrape, and Gren's been doing that for me always—"

"Stop, Maude, and listen seriously to what I have to say to you: Mr. Pearman has asked in earnest to be allowed to pay his addresses to you. Your father recommends you to think over it quietly and soberly. Bear in mind that we are very poor, and that he will be very rich."

"Mr. Pearman wants to marry me!" and the girl's face changed into a stare of blank astonishment; "why, I never saw him but once."

"No, love; but it is true, for all that."

"Well, mother, I can hardly believe it. On my word, I'm obliged to Mr. Pearman. I presume he thinks girls, like hothouse fruit, are a mere question of what you will give for them. Best let him know, mother mine, that your daughter is neither to be wooed nor won in that fashion."

(To be continued.)

ABYSSINIAN DETECTIVES.

Curious Experiment Employed to Find Criminals and Robbers.
A curious diplomatic incident has, as the Paris Petit Parisien hears from Abyssinia, occurred at Addis Abab. According to this story, whenever a theft is committed the owner of the stolen property applies to a sort of corporation, known as "Lied Aetal," or seekers after robbers, which sets immediately to work in a very simple and primitive fashion.

The chief of this corporation selects a child, and, in the presence of four witnesses, gives it a beverage, the composition of which is a secret. After the child has drunk the liquid a pipe is handed to it, and after a few whiffs, which have completed the stupefaction of the unlucky creature, it is led out for a walk.

When at last the child has stopped before some habitation, it is promptly and very conveniently assumed that the theft has been committed by the tenant, who is at once arrested. The chief of the corporation is rewarded for his share in the detection of the presumed culprit by a commission on the amount of the stolen property.

Now, it happened, a little while ago, that the child which had been pressed into such a service, halted near a bit of ground belonging to a European legation. The crowd, which had followed, broke down the inclosure, and the inclosure, and the chief of the "Lied Aetal," thus encouraged, insisted on the arrest of an interpreter. The result has been, as our contemporary adds, an emphatic protest on the part of the diplomatic corps, which, at least, refuses to put faith in this queer mode of tracking a thief to his lair.



The Homely One—Shall you marry Jack if I refuse him? The Pretty One—Yes, or if you accept him.

Customer—I would like some butter, please. **New Assistant (late of cigar store)—**Medium, mild or strong?

Mack—De Broke's ancestors were among the first settlers. **Taylor—**He doesn't take after them.—**Town Topics.**
"Yep, woman is certainly de cause of me being dis way. If me wife hadn't lost her job, I'd had a home right now."—**New Orleans Picayune.**

Wife (after a quarrel)—I wish I had never met you. **Hub—**Oh, yes! Now when it is too late you are sorry for me.—**Boston Transcript.**

She—How did Mr. Smith ever come to be such a wonder at golfing? **He—**Batting his collar button from under the bed with a yard stick.

"See, Fritz, we have been engaged now seven years." "Yes, dear; that means so many years less of married life."—**Meggendorfer Blatter.**

"I made enough money in Wall street last week to buy a house and lot." "Did you buy it?" "Well, no; but I wish I had."—**New York Herald.**

She—Do you think the married men really envy the bachelors? **He—**Ask me if I think a barnyard fowl envies the wild duck.—**Philadelphia Record.**

Query—Do you believe in vaccination every seven years? **Reply—**Rather! The operation keeps the girls from playing the piano for nearly a week!

Harker—They say that Rounder's wife has money. **Parker—**Well, that isn't Rounder's fault. They have been married only a week.—**Chicago Daily News.**

The Husband—Well, say what you will, my dear, you'll find worse men than me in the world. **The Wife—**Oh, Tom, how can you be so bitter?—**The Sketch.**

"Our charges are the lowest in town," observed the barber. "Cut rates, eh?" said the customer, as he looked at his lacerated chin in the glass.—**Judge.**

The Dear Girl!—He had the impudence to ask me for a kiss! **Her Dear Friend—**The Idea! What cheek! **The Dear Girl (blushing)—**He wasn't particular which.

Miss Kitty—Before you were married, Mrs. Bunt, did your husband bring you any flowers? **Mrs. Bunt—**I didn't have any husband before I was married, dear.

"So, your daughter is improving in her piano playing?" "Yes," answered Mr. Cumrox. "You enjoy it?" "No. But it doesn't make me as nervous as it used to."—**Washington Star.**

Hubby—What! Another new dress? **Wife—**Well, don't be so cross. I bought it with my own money. **Hubby—**Your own? Where did you get it from? **Wife—**I sold your fur coat.—**Puck.**

"Of course," said the optimist, "if a man gets into the habit of hunting trouble he's sure to find it." "Yes," replied the pessimist, "and if he's so lazy that he always tries to avoid it, it will find him. So what's the difference?"

AN APPROPRIATE PLACE.

Point in the Service That She Was Anxiously Waiting For.

Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Saunders were discussing the merits and difficulties of waists that button up the back, and Mrs. Martin said definitely that she did not like them; they are treacherous; that one can never be sure of them. Her friend admitted that they are uncertain, but declared that they are so much prettier than the stiff, straight, buttoned-up-the-front kind, that she rather preferred them. "Except in church," she added, with a little shrill of amusement.

"I always take off my coat—St. Thomas's is so dreadfully hot, you know, and then I sit way, way up by the chancel. If I didn't I wouldn't mind, for I can stare down anything wrong with the front of my waist—a rip, a tear, a cascade of ink, even. I just put my whole personality in my glance, and people never notice. But I can't turn round in church."

Mrs. Martin murmured an assent. "And the other Sunday," went on Mrs. Saunders, "I just felt something was wrong. The minute I took off my coat the congregation's eye seemed glued on me, and then I was certain that those three buttons that I never can manage had again betrayed me."

"What did you do?" asked Mrs. Martin, with interest, for Mrs. Saunders was known to be resourceful.

"Oh," airily, "I just waited for an appropriate place in the service, and then—"

"Why, what in the world do you mean? What appropriate place?" interrupted Mrs. Martin, curiously.

"O goosey! Why, when we knelt down and said, 'We have left undone the things that we ought to have done,' of course. Could anything be plainer? I just buttoned them up, then and there!"

"Illness" of Metals.

In its department bearing the heading "Annotations," the London Lancet discusses the "illnesses" of the elements and declares that some of the "sicknesses" to which the metals are subject are almost startlingly human in their nature. The article says, in part:

"There are abundant chemical phenomena indicating that stability can only be a relative term, and the truth is probably that no element is absolutely stable. The discovery of radium has introduced the doctrine of degradation, but whether that be definitely established or not, and radio-energy apart, spontaneous change would appear to be as true of inorganic materials as it is of organized entities.

"Yellow phosphorus gradually assumes a new complexion if left to the agencies of time, finishing a beautiful dark red. Is this a step in its retrograde movement toward becoming, that is, an element of a lower order? Why, again, does tin crumble to a gray powder if exposed for a long time to the cold? Tin foil succumbs in the same way and becomes crystalline and brittle right through. Why, again, does the railway line snap except that it is attacked by the same 'crystallizing disease'?"

"It would even appear that certain metals have their 'illnesses,' as though their activities were interfered with by a toxic process which may be pushed in many cases to such an extent that the metal 'dies.'"

Indivisible.

During a snowstorm on the Highland railway a train was held up for an hour or two. The guard, a cheery Scot, passed along the carriages trying to keep up the spirits of the passengers. An old gentleman angrily complained that if the train didn't go on he would "die of cold."

"Tak' my advice an' no' dae that," replied the guard. "Min' y', we chairgo a shillin' a mile for corpses."—**Dundee Advertiser.**

A Postponement.

"I thought you were going to be married in March," said the tall girl.

"I had expected to be," said the blue-eyed girl, "but I have put it off till June because my birthday comes in March, and if I get married then my wedding anniversary and birthday will come right together in future years and I'll get only half as many presents, because everybody will make one set of presents do for both occasions."

Sour Milk.

The milk was not of the desired sweetness one morning, and little Elmer pushed his glass away after taking a sip.

"What's the matter with the milk, Elmer?" asked his mother.

"I guess the milkman has been feeding his cow on pickles," was the reply.

Postal Treadmills.

"Talking about treadmills," said the owner of the flat. "My little postman says he's been on this beat for nineteen years. Imagine walking around a couple of blocks five or six times a day 'for nineteen years.'"

Too many people make the mistake of putting up their future happiness as collateral for the loan of a few dollars.