

The Lovers' Knot.

By Mariha Cobb Sanford.

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Ella Marden suddenly dropped her golf club and sat down under the shade of an elm tree.

"It's too hot to play," she announced languidly. "Do you mind finishing the course by yourself, Mr. West?"

Lyndon West glanced at her with very evident concern.

"You're not ill?" he asked anxiously.

"Not a bit of it," Ella assured him; "just lazy. Now, do finish and then come and tell me your score."

West hesitated.

"All right, if you wish it," he assented finally. "You'll promise to stay right here?"

She watched West swinging off over the green stretching links and then, bending forward, began to unlace one of her smart little tan boots.

"H'm," she said to herself, "that was easy." Suddenly she paused, her boot only partially loosened. "If he really liked me better than golf," she mused, "he would have insisted on staying with me. He's a selfish brute, after all, like the others. Well, it's lucky I had this chance to undress."

"Oh, Miss Marden," called a masculine voice very near her, "what are you doing all by yourself under a tree?"

Ella hid her foot under her skirt.

"Resting," she answered indifferently, "or at least trying to."

The man laughed incredulously.

"Something new for you, isn't it? I thought you were an indefatigable golfer. As for me, I always prefer resting."

"He finished jocosely, at the same time seating himself uninvited beside her.

Ella sighed. The man misinterpreted her meaning.

"Beastly hot!" he agreed.

Ella let the remark pass unnoticed. Soon she sighed again.

"Can't I fan you?" urged the man, taking up his hat and fanning the section to the words.

"Please don't," protested Ella, not overgraciously.

"But you're in distress," he insisted, noticing the drawn look on her face.

At this climax Ella lifted her face. It was certainly flushed—whether with sleeping Lyndon West was a bit in doubt.

"Thank you, Mr. Brayton," she said humbly. "It was awfully good of you to hunt it for me. Now please go on with your own game or you won't be able to finish before dark."

Brayton, though mystified, took his leave like a thoroughbred.

For a few eloquently silent seconds Ella and Lyndon looked at each other. Lyndon with the air of a man who has been the victim of a practical joke, and Ella with an expression half mischievous, half embarrassed.

"Perhaps you can explain," suggested Lyndon at length.

"Um, hum! I can," Ella assented. "Do you mind going back to where we were sitting? I think I left something here."

Lyndon went on the errand. He soon returned, carrying Ella's tan boot hanging by its lacing.

"If the beautiful Cinder-Ella will permit," he begged, kneeling before her.

"It isn't a Cinder at all," sniffed Ella scornfully. "It's a nail."

While Lyndon, with the aid of a stone or two, pounded down the refractory nail Ella made clear to him the sequence and denouement of the afternoon's events.

The boot finished, Lyndon again begged the privilege of putting it on the lady's dainty foot.

The lacing process was executed with great precision, but when it came to tying the knot Lyndon hesitated.

"Shall it be a true lovers' knot, dear?" he asked, looking up at her with grave affection.

Ella laughed. She couldn't help it—Lyndon was so serious and she was so happy.

"Is that the same as a bean knot?" she asked him archly.

And somehow, both helping, the knot was tied.

herchief hastily around her wounded finger and thrust the offending boot beneath her skirt.

"Well, here I am again!" sang out Lyndon. "Been lonely?"

"Haven't had a chance," laughed Ella. "Everybody that's passed felt called upon to sit down and keep me company."

"I don't wonder," was Lyndon's frankly admiring comment.

"Not one of them," announced Ella condemningly, "had the sense to see that I wanted to be by myself—to rest. You are either exceptionally perceptive, Mr. West, or exceptionally callous."

West, who had thrown himself wearily down on the grass, looked up in time to catch the mischief in Ella's sparkling eyes.

"I am exceptionally perceptive," he affirmed laughingly. "I knew you didn't want me to stay."

"But you are quite sure I am glad you are back?" she teased.

Whatever Lyndon had in mind to reply was not spoken.

"Jump!" he shouted excitedly. "A ball's coming!"

Ella grasped his hand and sprang up just as a swiftly driven ball brushed by her skirt. Then, still holding Lyndon's hand, she hopped on one foot to a nearby stump.

"It struck you," gasped Lyndon. "You are hurt. Where?"

Ella, convulsed, raised her handkerchief to her face.

"It is your hand—it is bleeding," he exclaimed. "Let me see it! I thought it was your foot."

At this dramatic moment Stearns appeared with a glass of water.

"I'm sorry I was so long, Miss Marden," he began apologetically.

West snatched the glass from him.

"You were miraculously quick," he said gratefully. "Here, Miss Marden," he began, "drink this."

But Ella, who was apparently sobbing, could not be induced to lift her face from her handkerchief.

"Just leave her to me, Stearns," urged West. "She'll be all right in a few minutes. And thanks ever so much, old man."

Stearns, utterly flabbergasted, but well aware that he was quite de trop, walked slowly off.

Hot upon the heels of his involuntary retreat Brayton loomed into view.

"Here's the ball, Miss Marden," he called victoriously.

"Who cares about the ball?" snapped Lyndon. "Go find the one who sent it if you want to make yourself useful!"

"Well, what's the matter with you?" demanded the angered Brayton.

At this climax Ella lifted her face. It was certainly flushed—whether with sleeping Lyndon West was a bit in doubt.

"Thank you, Mr. Brayton," she said humbly. "It was awfully good of you to hunt it for me. Now please go on with your own game or you won't be able to finish before dark."

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Good Proof.

At a colored revival two of the brethren started an argument as to the nationality of St. Peter. One brother claimed he was a colored man, while the other one said he was not.

After arguing for quite awhile one brother, becoming greatly excited, said, "St. Peter was not a colored man, and Ah can prove it."

"All right," said the other. "Go ahead."

"Well, in de fust place, you recom-mem-ber wah it say in de Bible dat sifst St. Peter denied de Lord de cock crowed for de third time?"

"Yes, I recom-mem-ber dat," said the other.

"Well, dat's de solution to de problem, for do you suppose for an instant dat if St. Peter had been a culud man dat dat rooster would eber hab crowed more dan once?"—Judge.

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—Lippincott's Magazine.

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