



CHAPTER VII.

The cricket match had taken place. Tom's eleven, thanks to Dallas, had won a glorious victory. The guests were gone from the Hall. It was a lovely afternoon, with a soft west wind.

Never had June looked to such advantage as she did that evening at dinner. There was a lovely color in her cheeks, a new light in her eyes; her voice had a joyous ring; she seemed to be an incarnation of pleasure and happiness.

"Would not you young people like to go into the garden?" said Mrs. Ellesmere the moment dinner was over, and they obeyed her suggestion with alacrity.

"Let us get into the boat," whispered Dallas; and June gave a radiant assent. Twilight was creeping on, all nature was hushed; they might have been the only two living creatures on earth. And, for the time being, they would have been content to have the world to themselves. Tonight June knew the difference that the society of another human being can make to all life, to all nature—knew how it can fill every moment with a strange, heavenly rapture, marred only by remembering how fleeting is the joy.

Neither seemed disposed to talk much; both were possessed by a sense of happiness. The moon came out and lit up the flowers on the bank, turning them to many colored jewels.

"How I wish this could last forever!" murmured Dallas, at last, bending a little toward June.

She smiled and sighed. The smile was for content, the sigh for regret.

Suddenly an uneasy scruple came over Dallas. Was he not acting a traitor's part to Tom—Tom, who would never have been disloyal to any human being? Ought he not, instead of making love to this fair girl on his own account, to be pleading his cousin's cause? It was extremely repugnant to him, but the better side of his nature was awake to-night. And any thought of marrying June himself was out of the question. Some day he would be a baronet, with a fair income; not, however, in all probability, before he was getting gray and well on in years; he had several brothers and sisters, he had debts, a penniless wife for him, therefore, was a luxury not even to be contemplated in the remotest manner. Tom—lucky chap!—had no factor to consult save his own will—and the lady's.

"You were not serious the other day," Dallas asked June, "when you said that you did not mean to marry Tom?"

For a moment all June's sense of happiness vanished; a cold pang swept over her. She had forgotten that Tom existed.

"Do not let us talk of him!" she said, with a little gesture that conveyed disgust more expressively than she was aware of.

"Not much chance," thought Dallas, "for a man to whom a woman feels like that." He was almost ashamed of himself for the satisfaction which her action gave him. "How you snubbed me that first night at dinner!" he said, with a half smile, after a pause. "I never felt so small. You turned your back on me all dinner time, and though I was watching my opportunity like a cat to speak to you, you never gave it me until, by a lucky accident, you dropped your fan under the table."

June smiled pensively. How well she remembers that evening! how she likes to think that he noticed her behavior!

"Why were you so unkind?"

"I wanted not to like you," she answers, simply. "I made up my mind that I would not."

"But you have changed it now, have you not?" looking into the depths of her eyes.

"Yes," she says.

Why should she lie to him? Ah! she has indeed changed, if there ever was a time when she did not like him. But was there ever such a time?

"I," he says, tenderly, "have never changed from the first moment that I saw you. I can't tell you how much hurt I was that you would not be friends with me. The only time I ever thought you felt a little bit kind to me was that evening of the dance. Do you remember?"

"Does June remember? Ay, most truly does she."

She bends her head in answer.

"I was dying to ask you again, but I dared not. I thought it was best not."

"Best for you and best for me," quotes June, smiling.

"Only for me," he answers. "I was not such a conceited ass as to think it could make any difference to you. And then I imagined that you belonged to Tom."

June makes an impatient movement through the water with her fingers. She cannot bear any allusion to Tom to-night.

"How divinely you dance!" says Dallas. Then, with a sudden inspiration, "Why should we not have a waltz to-night? My aunt plays dance music charmingly."

"Oh, yes!" echoes June, her eyes kindling with pleasure; "let us ask her!"

Dallas takes up the sculls, and in two minutes they are at the landing place.

He jumps out, secures the boat, and gives her his hand.

Slowly and silently, for very joy's sake, they move together up to the house.

Mrs. Ellesmere is rousing herself from her slumbers.

"Auntie," says Dallas, laying a caressing arm round her shoulder, "we want you to do something for us."

"What is it, dear boy?" she asks, with a fond glance at his good-looking young face, consent already implied by her tone.

"Won't you come into the hall and play us one of your delicious waltzes? We are dying to have a turn."

"Of course I will," she answers, smiling, and feeling extremely gratified at the course events are taking. A glance at June's face assures her that her irresistible nephew has made one more conquest, one to which he is most heartily welcome.

So, with the kindest grace in the world, she goes to the piano and plays unwearily while these two reckless young people, heart beating to heart, their souls drunk with the intoxication of their love and the rhythm of their movements, are weaving, with gossamer threads of rapture, the web of future pain.

"Let us go for a stroll under the trees," said Dallas. June rose, and together they disappeared from the lynx eyes of some one who was watching them from the drawing room window.

They sauntered in the grove where Tom loved to take June as being retired from prying eyes; but, ah! how different was it to-day! The seclusion which had irked her so with Tom, from which she had longed to escape, seemed an enchantment whose only flaw was that it must have an end.

They were reaching for the tenth time the evergreen arch which divided them from the flower garden. Dallas stopped, and June stood still beside him.

"How shall I see you to-morrow?" he says, his eyes full of tenderness and a touch of regret in his voice. "Tom will be here, and then my short day will be over."

June meets his gaze for one moment, then her eyes droop, and a flickering color comes into her cheek.

"My darling!" he murmurs, and his arm takes gentle possession of her slight form, his handsome face bends down to hers, his lips touch hers, not with the eager haste with which they have oftentimes sought red lips before, but with a tenderness and reverence new to him, but most exceeding sweet.

And June! Her heart gives one mighty throb; involuntarily her eyes close; for one moment a trance seems to steal her soul.

She makes a movement to disengage herself from his arms; he yields to it at once; and then, before they have time to recover themselves, each hears a sound of hurrying feet and then Tom's voice shouting:

"Dad! where are you?"

The awakening is horrible. Tom here already? Both feel like culprits—Dallas perhaps even more than June.

Dallas shouts in answer, and Tom's big form looms straightway in the opening. He does not wear that cheery, genial smile which is the ordinary garb of his face; he is evidently ill pleased; his light-blue eyes express anything but satisfaction. He shakes both by the hand, and they try to look delighted, and feel secretly awkward and a little bit afraid of this usually good-humored giant. He is like a big Newfoundland—the children's slave and plaything—who shows temper for the first time.

"I managed to catch the earlier train," he says, standing tapping his boot with his stick. "I thought there was a chance, and told the dog cart to meet me."

Then they ply him with questions about his journey and the Show, and he answers them, but he is not the Tom they are used to. Something is wrong with him. When they all go into the house together and June finds Agnes drinking tea with Mrs. Ellesmere she has a terribly shrewd suspicion who it is that has been making mischief and putting ideas into Tom's head.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Dad!"

"Well, old chap?"

Dallas tried to make his tone light and unsuspecting, but was conscious that the effort was somewhat of a failure.

"I heard something when I came back to-day—that was not very pleasant hearing."

"Oh," thought Dallas, with sudden inspiration, "that confounded sanctimonious cousin, I lay a thousand!"

"I am told," and Tom's voice betrayed evident nervousness, "that Miss Rivers has been up here ever since I left."

"She lunched here to-day."

"Oh!" remarked Tom, shortly. "Look here, Dad!—with immense emphasis—"there must be a little plain speaking between us. I think you know that I am not a jealous chap. I have never felt the least grudge against you on my mother's account. I have never envied you your success with women—I never wanted to

succeed but with one; but," dashing his hand down on the table till every glass rang, "if you come between me and June Rivers, I will never take your hand again as long as I have breath in my body."

Dallas, whose thoughts go with fifty times the rapidity of his cousin's, has time during this oration to reflect and decide.

"My dear old chap," he said, looking across into Tom's disturbed and angry face and feeling horribly ashamed of his own duplicity, "what are you driving at?"

Tom paused.

"I don't like to think," he said, with a straight, stern look at his cousin, "that you have not the same instincts of honor and gentlemanlike feeling that almost every man has. I never doubted you before; but when I hear of you sitting hand in hand with the girl whom you know I love—"

"Who said it?"

"No matter," answered Tom, to whom the thought suddenly occurred that he must not allow Agnes to suffer for her fidelity to his interests.

Dallas felt the time had come to take the bull by the horns.

"I thought," he remarked, "that the last time we talked about Miss Rivers you expressed a wish that I should endeavor to conquer her evident dislike to me; and now you want to go down my throat for having tried to make friends with her. I think I can guess who your informant is, and, perhaps, in the innocence of your heart, you do not see through her last move in the game. It is plain enough that Miss Agnes is in love with you, and would do anything in the world to set you against her cousin."

Tom was exceedingly troubled. Were not both Dal's remarks perfectly true? Was he, then, only a blundering fool, ready to be the prey of any one who chose to play on his feelings? He felt rather ashamed of himself.

"Perhaps I am wrong," he said, awkwardly. "If so, I beg your pardon. But," after a moment's pause, "I know—of course I cannot help seeing—how much more there is in you than in me to attract a woman."

"Pshaw!" cried Dallas, angrily, thrusting his chair back and rising, "don't talk such rot! Take my word for it, Tom, there is nothing hinders a man, especially with women, like having a poor opinion of himself. The world always takes you at your own valuation when it's a low one."

Tom rose, too, and went toward his cousin.

"If I was unjust," he said, in his own frank, manly way, thereby causing a pang of remorse to shoot through Dallas' breast, "I beg your pardon. But I should like you to give me your hand on it that you will not try to come between me and my little girl."

So Dallas gave his hand and swore to himself to be faithful to the bond of which this was the seal. Then he went out into the garden alone, and, stepping into the boat, pushed off from the shore, and lay on his back, looking up into the moonlit heaven and thinking with a bitter pang of this time last night.

It was the first time in his life that he had loved with true, genuine affection, and it was also the first time that he had felt absolutely without hope. There was only one thing for it—to get out of the way of temptation as soon as possible. He had given his word to Tom, and, so help him, God, he meant to keep it.

The next morning June was sadly preoccupied during her studies; she could think of nothing but Dallas and what pretext he could make to see her to-day. When she returned home at midday, Mrs. Rivers said:

"Tom has been here."

June turned to the window to conceal her face. Her heart beat wildly. She waited almost in terror for the next words. Had he come to complain and protest to her mother? But Mrs. Rivers' tone was perfectly calm and unsuspecting.

"He had just been to see his cousin off by the train."

A sudden dizziness caused June's brain to reel, a deathly faintness to creep through her heart; she had to hold the chair tightly against which she was leaning.

Dallas gone, and without a word, a line to her! There had been a quarrel doubtless between the two men, which had ended in Dallas leaving the Hall. But surely he might have communicated with her by some means. And Tom had told her mother nothing; that was evident.

When June could command her face and voice, she turned away from the window.

"Was it not rather sudden, Mr. Broke leaving?" she asked.

"I think it was. Tom said he had a letter this morning calling him back to London."

"And how was Tom?" June asked, trying to speak indifferently.

"He seemed in capital spirits."

(To be continued.)

Death from Corns.

All that troubled Mary Murray, of Brooklyn, after 72 years of life, was that her corns hurt her so much that she couldn't get around as brisk and lively as a girl of her age ought to. She determined to take heroic measures, and, borrowing a razor, she sliced off the annoying protuberances. One of her toes bled slightly, and she applied ammonia to it. Three days later she died. Blood poisoning the doctors said.

The Colonel Disapproved.

"Won't you join us?" said the young man.

"What are you going to do?" inquired Col. Stillwell.

"To make up a skating party."

"No, sub," was the emphatic reply. "I will not join any skating party. If there is anything upon which I pride myself, it is my ability, sub, to indulge without excess, sub."

The fellow who is always straining to be great, wears himself smaller and smaller.

CHRISTMAS AT WASHINGTON.

President and Foreign Ministers Observe the Day With Festivities.

Washington, Dec. 26.—Snow, which began falling late last night, gave Washington a genuine Christmas appearance. Public and private business was practically entirely suspended. Interest centered in the happenings at the White House. Early in the morning the President, and all the members of his family repaired to the library, where presents were exchanged and many boxes and packages which had come from out of town opened. There were a large number of callers, and many gifts in the shape of handsome floral pieces were received.

Soon after breakfast, the President, Theodore, Jr., and Lieutenant Ferguson, of the Rough Riders, who is a White House guest, took a long horseback ride, returning in time to join the rest of the family at luncheon with Commander and Mrs. Cowles.

At the homes of the Cabinet officers the day was quietly observed, while among the Embassies and Legations elaborate preparations had been made for celebrating. Official dinner parties were given by the British and Russian Ambassadors. The Argentine Minister and wife gave a children's party at the Legation, while the Minister of Peru and his wife entertained a number of Peruvian students in the various schools and colleges of the United States.

The President and Mrs. Roosevelt entertained a number of friends at dinner. The table was set in the newly furnished state dining-room. The guests included Senator and Mrs. Lodge, John Lodge, Captain and Mrs. Cowles, John Elliott, of New York; Mrs. Charles H. Davis, Miss Davis, the Messrs. Davis and Robert Ferguson.

At the Mexican Embassy the feast day was celebrated by a supper to-night.

THE DAY IN ENGLAND.

King Edward Plays Lord Bountiful and The London Poor Have a Feast.

London, Dec. 26.—King Edward and Queen Alexandra spent the day at Sandringham, this being the first Christmas their majesties have spent at their favorite residence since their accession. The royal family, including the Prince of Wales, Princess Victoria, the Duchess of Fife and Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark, attended an early service at Sandringham church, which was beautifully decorated. The King afterwards personally directed the annual distribution of the beef and game to the employes and tenants on the Sandringham estate.

London and the south of England generally enjoyed an unusually cold day. In spite of the low temperature, there was the usual gathering in Battersea Park, where 20 men who take their open-air early morning dip all the year round had their Christmas swim in the lake. Silver medals were presented to several among the bathers who had not missed a single day during the previous year. The prevailing distress among the unemployed brought forth an unusual number of charitable dinners in all sections of London, especially in the East End.

A severe gale swept the north coast of Great Britain and caused considerable damage to shipping and waterfront property on the Clyde and the Tyne.

SENDS A CHECK INSTEAD.

President Too Busy to Play Santa Claus at Oyster Bay.

New York, Dec. 26.—For the second time in 15 years, says a Press dispatch from Oyster Bay, President Roosevelt did not act as Kris Kringle in person at the Cove school, where his children were taught prior to his elevation to the head of the Nation. Last year the President could not spare the time to come here, and this year events have been pressing too fast about him to admit of his coming.

Some days ago Mr. Roosevelt sent a little slip of paper bearing his autograph, which enabled the principal to deal more liberally with her charges than she had been able to do before. The sleds, games and dolls were more costly than usual and the candies in greater quantity. There were two tree instead of one, and Miss Provost, the principal, read a letter from President Roosevelt telling the boys and girls how sorry he was that he could not be with them.

A telegram was sent to the President telling him how much the children appreciated his gifts and wishing him many more years in his present position.

Death of Col. Lockwood.

New York, Dec. 27.—Colonel Henry Clay Lockwood is dead, in Bellevue Hospital, of a short illness. He was 63 years old. Colonel Lockwood was educated for the bar, and enlisted in 1862 in the Union Army. He was brevetted Major for gallantry at the storming of Fort Fisher.

He was the author of "The Abolition of the Presidency," in which he advocated a plural executive, to be known as the Executive Council, which should be chosen in joint session by the two houses of Congress, and several other works.

Frost Stopped a Warm Heart.

Duluth, Minn., 26.—George Plydell, aged 55, with his arms full of Christmas presents for friends and relatives, fell from exhaustion when within five feet of his home, and froze to death last night. Plydell lived all alone in a little house near the harbor front, where he conducted a confectionery and cigar store.

OCEAN'S PERILS

Crew of Wrecked Steamer Sucked Each Other's Blood.

FIGHT TO THE DEATH FOR AN APPLE

Death Released One Victim—Salt Water Drove Another Crazy—Survivors Rescued by a Steamer.

Victoria, B. C., Dec. 29.—Austrian papers received by the steamer Moana tell of the terrible privations of the survivors of the wrecked steamer Elingamite, lost on the Three Kings, a trio of towering heights off the northern extremity of New Zealand. The blood of the unfortunates were sucked while they slept, the stewardess, Miss McGuirk, being so weakened that she died.

On a raft 16 people left the vessel and were four days with nothing but two apples and no water. One apple was divided the first day, and the second they indulged in a desperate fight for possession of the other apple. Three deaths occurred from exhaustion on the second day, the bodies being left until putrefaction set in before the survivors pushed them into the sea. Several started to drink salt water, and, maddened by this, four jumped overboard.

On the third night a steamer was sighted, and the shipwrecked people shouted. The vessel lowered a boat, but it did not find the raft in the darkness, and the steamer proceeded, leaving the unfortunates to their fate.

It was that night that the blood-letting commenced. After the stewardess, weakened from loss of blood, had died in the arms of the second steward, he began to rave and a few minutes later lowered himself from the raft, singing a hymn as he went.

Finally, four days after they left the wreck, H. M. S. engine found the drifting raft and saved the few remaining survivors.

AT LEAST TEN DEAD.

List of Victims of Trinidad Train Wreck Growing Larger.

Trinidad, Col., Dec. 29.—Developments indicate that the wreck on the Colorado & Southern Railroad just outside of this city last night, which was caused by a collision between a merchandise freight train and a heavily-loaded coal train, was the most disastrous in the history of the road where freight trains alone were concerned. It is known tonight that at least 10 men were killed, and rumor has it that several more bodies will be unearthed before the wreckage is cleared away.

Two unidentified bodies are exposed to view but have not yet been removed from the wreckage.

It is feared that several miners, who were supposed to be riding on the coal train and were on the way to Trinidad to spend Christmas, are under the debris. Information received by friends of different people residing in this city was to the effect that they would be in Trinidad today and it is learned that men were seen boarding the coal train at Hastings, Ludlow, Walsenburg and Aguirre as it pulled through. As they paid no fare there is no record of how many there were on the train, if any.

Wrecking crews have worked diligently all day clearing the tracks and succeeded in removing the wreckage of the engines. The freight cars are piled in a great heap on the right of way, and it will require all day tomorrow to get things in shape for running trains over the road at this point. In the meantime all Colorado & Southern trains are running over the tracks of the Denver & Rio Grande.

HANGED BY A MOB.

Negro Kills an Officer, and is Hung to a Telephone Pole.

Pittsburg, Kans., Dec. 27.—Montgomery Godley, a Negro, was taken from the jail today and lynched by a mob, because early this morning he shot and killed Milton Hinkley, a policeman, while the officer was trying to protect himself from a crowd of unruly Negroes. The Negro jerked the officers pistol from its scabbard and shot the officer with it from behind. Two hours later a mob gathered and took the Negro from the city jail, where he had been taken after he was caught, and hanged him to a telephone pole. As he was choking to death one of the members of the mob cut his throat and ended his suffering.

Kaiser Has a Good Time.

Berlin, Dec. 29.—Emperor William spent Christmas in his usual way. His Majesty took a walk in the afternoon in the Sans Souci Park and distributed bright gold pieces fresh from the mint among the gardeners and watchmen.

After dinner at 4 o'clock the Christmas trees were lighted in the Shell hall of the new palace. All the children of the imperial family were present and each had his or her own tree of a size proportionate to the child.

Pope Leo Takes a Hand.

London, Dec. 29.—The Rome correspondent of the Daily Mail telegraphs as an outcome of the negotiations with the Saxon Court, the pope has sent a prelate to Geneva to inquire into the circumstances of the flight of the Crown Princess of Saxony, with a view to arranging a separation.