



## CHAPTER XXII.

"I do not suspect you of anything," said June, with a quiver in her voice, "but I know that hateful woman has got some dreadful influence over you, and is always plotting to cause unhappiness between us. Here I have been away and was coming back happy and delighted to see you, and I am made wretched the instant I set foot in the house, and all through her!"

"No, no," said Tom. "Be just. Put the saddle on the right horse. All through Madge. If she hadn't come sneaking and spying up here this morning she wouldn't have got my back up and made me say what I did, and which she most richly deserved. As for the other poor girl, no one was ever more mistaken in this world than you are about her. Why, she speaks of you in the kindest way."

"And," proceeded June, working herself up more and more, and tears again rushing to her eyes, "now you have deprived me of my only friend here, and the only person I have to amuse me, I hope you will be happy."

At this last stab, given merely in naughtiness of temper, Tom rose, mightily grieved and wrathful. He never said anything he did not mean merely for the momentary pleasure of wounding, but, on the other hand, he rarely could be brought to retract anything he had once said.

"Then," he said, "if that is the case, heaven help your husband and child!"

And, with that, he strode from the room, leaving June with a sickening sense of general misery.

June had some sound good sense when it was not obscured by temper, as the sky is blue though the clouds hide its color. And presently she told herself that this state of things must be stopped, and stopped at once.

So, suddenly she rose, and fled downstairs to Tom's room. He was sitting staring gloomily in the fire, absorbed, no doubt, in reflections as miserable as those in which she had been indulging upstairs, but he had a refuge and resource which she had not—his pipe.

June had not come to argue, to fight, the quarrel over again, and possibly to make a worse ending than before; she had brought a flag of truce, and left all explanations for a future time. She sat herself down on his knee, took the pipe from his mouth, put her pretty arms round his neck and her red lips to his, and said, with a faltering voice:

"My darling, don't let us have any more misunderstandings!"

And, with that, Tom clasped her passionately to his heart, and a sob rose in his throat, and for the moment they forgot everything but that they loved each other.

When June paid her promised visit to Madge next day, she felt rather perturbed and uncomfortable in her mind. Madge would of course expect to hear that she had vanquished Tom in single combat, and had come to take her back in triumph to the Hall, from which yesterday she had been so ignominiously turned away. But June was painfully conscious that it was she who had been vanquished, for, fearful of any rupture of their new-born harmony, she had not mentioned the name of either cousin to Tom. She knew instinctively that he would not give in; if he made any amende to Madge, it would only be on condition of his wife doing the same to Agnes.

Her ladyship, therefore, was forced to answer Madge's eager cross-questioning somewhat lamely and haltingly, and gradually there came into that shrewd young lady's face an expression of profound disappointment.

"Then," she said, in a mortified tone, "you did not take my part, and you have not been even with Tom?"

"My dear child," replied June, desperately, "if you are married to a man, it is impossible to live in a state of strife and quarreling with him, unless you want to break your own heart. What is to be gained by my being on bad terms with Tom?"

"Well," replied Madge, "I don't understand it. I should have thought you, who are fifty times cleverer and have fifty times more spirit than Tom, would have turned him round your finger. Why, any child could do it."

Two days passed, and, though Sir Thomas and Lady Nevil were apparently on the best of terms, neither was really at ease. June missed Madge and wanted to have her back at the Hall, but was afraid to broach the subject, and Tom knew that she missed her cousin, and felt vexed about the misunderstanding, but was convinced that he would be doing wrong to Agnes and conning at an injustice if Madge returned to her old relations at the house while Agnes was left out in the cold.

On the third day June, feeling the hopelessness of the situation, said, in a matter-of-fact voice at luncheon, in the presence of the servants:

"Shall we ask them all at the rectory to come up and dine to-morrow?"

And Tom responded most heartily, and with an enormous sense of relief.

"Ay, my dear, do."

Her ladyship was the more disposed to make the concession in that her husband had met her wishes about taking a house in London in the kindest manner. That he did not like the idea was evident, but so far from combating the proposal, he had given in to it at once, and agreed that his mother should take a house and make all necessary preparations. He would not give any promise about going up much himself, but if June came down every week he and the boy would manage to get along for the rest of the time.

Lady Nevil wrote an affectionate note to Mrs. Bryan asking them all to dine the following evening. She thought it not improbable that her cousins would refuse to come. But both had reasons for not wishing the estrangement from the Hall to be prolonged, and were, besides, anxious that their parents should be kept in ignorance of the unpleasantness which had occurred. This, however, contributed to make the evening a thoroughly unpleasant one for their host and hostess. Madge met Tom in the most supercilious manner, scarcely deigning to give him her finger tips, and behaved afterward as though he did not exist; neither speaking nor looking his way all the evening, but devoting herself to June. Agnes, on the contrary, redoubled her attentions to Tom, and hung on every word with a pertinacious affection which nearly maddened June. Frequently, too, Agnes would smile at her with an expression of mingled sweetness and triumph which her ladyship understood only too well.

The weeks passed. Easter was at hand, and June looked joyfully forward to having visitors in the house, Dallas among them. She felt his cheery face and voice would bring light and life to the Hall, which certainly was not very lively just at present. Madge came up sometimes, but avoided Tom as much as possible, or, when she met him, treated him with ill-concealed hostility. Agnes came, too, and invariably set every nerve in June's body tingling with irritation.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Mrs. Ellesmere and Dallas arrived together just at the propitious moment—that is to say, three-quarters of an hour before dinner, in time to exchange greetings, to have five minutes' chat, and then to go off and dress for dinner.

The dinner was of the merriest. June was in the highest spirits—Dallas the same—Mrs. Ellesmere in her very best mood. The dinner was perfection, and conversation never flagged for a moment.

Tom's perceptions were not particularly quick, but they must have been slow indeed had he not observed the transformation in his wife. She had been so quiet lately, and dinner had been rather a solemn performance, not enlivened by any very brilliant conversation. But to-night her ladyship's charming face was dimpled by smiles, her eyes were full of light. He supposed she wore a different sort of gown, for she looked, somehow, even prettier and more elegant than usual. Dallas had the old manner which Tom had been wont half to admire, half to be amused at. His mother was a good talker, and the three seemed to have topics of interest and amusement which were Greek to Tom. The talk was chiefly of people, mutual friends, and it was evident that they found it immensely engrossing and absorbing, and all took equal pleasure in it.

The two following days there were more guests at the Hall, for June took the opportunity of Mrs. Ellesmere's visit to give dinners to their country neighbors, and some who came from a distance stayed in the house. Dallas was invaluable in helping to entertain them, and Madge brought her services from the rectory.

But Dallas confided to his hostess that he was perfectly delighted when they were all gone, and expressed a hope, couched in deferential though emphatic terms, that she would never consider it necessary to ask any one there for his benefit, as it only prevented his enjoying the society of the lady from whose presence he derived the most pleasure.

It was now the fourth day after his arrival. The omnibus had departed with the last batch of guests; the morning was wet, and they were wondering how they should amuse themselves, when her ladyship had a happy inspiration. Battledoor and shuttle-cock. These were found after a search; the battledoors were dried by the hall fire, and the shuttle-cocks had their feathers rearranged, and Dallas and June began their game. Now, to thoroughly experienced players, there is not very much excitement in the game of battledoor; the players stand still in the same place and the shuttle-cock takes its flight regularly and unbrokenly between them; but to beginners it involves a great deal of rushing and tearing about, violent dashes forward and backward, and is provocative of a great amount of laughter. At the moment when the game was at its height, and peals of mirth were issuing from the lips of Dallas and June, Agnes, arrayed in her waterproof, arrived at the hall door, and the same instant Tom hap-

pened to issue from his den, and proceeded to let her in.

"Is that June's voice?" she asked, putting on the most surprised and shocked expression her puritanical face was capable of. "What is she doing?"

"She and Dal are playing battledoor," answered Tom, and then, for the first time, the idea occurred to him, or rather was forced upon him by Agnes' face, that their mirth was rather exuberant.

"Oh!" she uttered, putting a volume of expression into the word.

June had just sunk, breathless from laughing and running, into a chair, and Dallas leaned against the wall in much the same condition. Both their faces were becomingly flushed from excitement and exercise, and, to unjaundiced eyes, they would have seemed the picture of two handsome, happy and innocently amused young people. But not to the envious eyes of Agnes, and she allowed them to express to June how very much scandalized she was by such levity. In a moment June read her cousin's face, and a thrill of anger and defiance shot through her breast, which the previous moment had been a harbor of peace and happiness.

"How do you do?" she said, nodding, and making her battledoor an excuse for not shaking hands. "I am quite exhausted. Would you like to have a turn with Tom?"

"No, I thank you," replied Agnes, frigidly. "I did not know it was a game grown-up people played."

"Did you not?" said June, lightly. "Ah, that comes of living in the country. One sees and knows so little."

"Perhaps one is the better for that," returned Agnes, in her most schoolmistress-like manner.

"I doubt it," retorted June. "Now, Dal, I have recovered my breath. Shall we go on?"

It was the first time she had ever called him by his Christian name, and she would not have done it now but that Agnes had inspired her with a furious desire to do something that would give her cousin cause to be shocked.

"May I go and see darling boy?" said Agnes to Tom, with a glance of deepest commiseration, and he replied cheerily that he would go with her.

The game no longer had any charm for June; she felt as though the serpent had entered paradise, and, after five minutes, she declared she was tired.

"I must go and write some letters," she said, and Dallas pleaded that he might be allowed to occupy himself in the same way in her company. So they betook themselves to her ladyship's boudoir, where she supplied him with the requisite materials, and then sat down to her writing-table.

Dallas had come for the inside of a week, and sorely sorry was his hostess to see him depart on the Saturday morning. It was like sunshine going out of the house.

June went to the door to see her guest off, and returned to her room with a decided sinking at her heart, knowing that his bright face and voice would make themselves terribly missed, and suddenly burst into a fit of crying. Agnes passed the window, and stopped for a moment to look in. As she reached the hall door, Tom was coming round from the stables.

"Oh, Tom," she said, with well-feigned anxiety, "there is nothing the matter with darling boy, is there?"

"No," he answered, startled—"certainly not. But why?"

"Why, I just came round past the morning room," returned Agnes, innocently, "and I saw poor June crying so dreadfully that I thought—I was afraid—"

"June crying!" exclaimed Tom; and then he paused abruptly, as a most unpleasant thought smote him.

Dinner that night was a very different sort of function from what it had been of late. A gloom seemed to have fallen on the party.

"How silent we all are!" observed Mrs. Ellesmere, as it was drawing to a close, "and how dreadfully I miss that dear boy! Don't you, my dear?" to June.

"Yes," answered June, and at that moment she caught Tom's eye fixed on her in a manner she neither quite liked nor understood, and was deeply mortified to find herself growing crimson.

(To be continued.)

## An Invisible Clue.

"There was one time in my house-keeping career," said the lady who had had the experience, "when I thought there was no use of locking doors, for thieves would break through anything."

"We were sitting at dinner one night when I heard a noise that sounded as if some one was walking around in my room. I went up immediately to see. No one was there, but every drawer in the room was open and all my jewelry and valuables of every description that I kept in my room were gone. It took five or six keys to get at them all, as I had been very particular about keeping them locked up. I had not been out of the room more than fifteen minutes, and how any one not familiar with every inch of the house could have accomplished such a piece of work was a mystery. There was one thing I noticed upon entering the room and that was a peculiar odor. It was like a mixture of cheap perfume. I had never smelled anything like it before."

"We notified the police and they worked on the case for weeks, but could make nothing out of it."

"One day when I was passing through the laundry I noticed that same strange odor."

"Mary, what's that you are ironing?" said I, for it seemed as if the odor came from the ironing board."

"It's some of my brother's handkerchiefs," said she.

"We investigated, and of course found that the brother was the thief."

A 130-pound conger eel has been caught in Loch Long, Scotland. It measured 6 feet 10½ inches in length and 2 feet 7 inches in girth.

## CANNOT SHELVE TREATIES.

If Senate Does Not Ratify Them an Extra Session is Assured.

Washington, Feb. 21.—Some of the opponents of the Cuban reciprocity treaty thought that it could be shelved along with other legislative matters to which there was opposition, and have been claiming to themselves that the president would never call the senate in special session simply for the Cuban treaty. Mr. Roosevelt made it very plain today that the senate could either pass the Cuban treaty or come in special session to consider it. He did not propose to have it lapse simply because certain senators have made objections and kept it from being considered. Under this threat it is probable that at some time before the session ends the senate will ratify the treaty in order to avoid returning to Washington after March 4.

Many senators who are going to vote for the Colombian canal treaty admit that it is loosely drawn and that it has some features which are objectionable to this government. Morgan, who is trying to kill it, is doing so in the interest of the Nicaragua canal. He thinks that if this treaty could be defeated there would be a chance for Nicaragua.

The friends of the Panama canal treaty claim that the action of the president in accepting the offer of the Panama canal company closes the bargain, and that the canal must be constructed at Panama. Only a small minority of the senate is opposing the Panama canal now, and it is doubtful if it can be defeated, as a large majority is determined to put it through.

## CHILDREN ARE SLAIN.

Crowded Trolley Car and Passenger Train Collide with Fatal Results.

Newark, N. J., Feb. 20.—A fast express on the Lackawanna railroad cut through a trolley car crowded with school children at the Clifton avenue crossing today. Eight of the children were killed and a score or more others injured. The motorman, who stuck to his post, will die, and the engineer of the express was so badly hurt that there is little hope of his recovery.

Both the express and the trolley were on steep grades, going at right angles. The express was signalled and the gates were lowered while the trolley car was yet half way down the hill. The motorman shut off the power and applied the brakes, but almost immediately the car began to slip along the icy rails. It gained tremendous momentum and at the bottom of the hill crashed through the gates, directly in the track of the oncoming train. The locomotive plowed its way through the trolley, throwing the children in every direction.

The accident happened within three blocks of the high school building and in the car at the time were nearly 100 pupils. As many as 30 others had managed to throw themselves from the car before the crash came. The trolley was one of the specials which every day bring the children to school. It had more than its ordinary load today, owing to cold weather. It contained every child that could squeeze inside, and others stood on the rear platform. The car had been so crowded that many who were waiting for it before the hill was reached could not get on, although some climbed on the front platform with the motorman.

## EXPLOSION IN FORT.

Shells in La Fayette Slay Four Men and Work Awful Havoc.

New York, Feb. 21.—Three men were killed outright, one man so seriously injured that he died later, two men fatally and at least seven seriously hurt in an explosion in the workroom of the naval storage magazine at Fort La Fayette, in New York bay, about 2 o'clock this afternoon.

Several were taken to their homes or to Brooklyn hospitals. All the dead and injured were workmen at the fort.

The explosion could be heard for miles around. Accounts as to how the fatal blast was set off differ. One report has it that the men were filling a 13-inch shell, while another has it that the men were removing a powder charge from a shell and undertook to unwind a fuse, connecting the powder chamber with the percussion cap. This caused sufficient friction to set off the cap and thus explode the shell.

## Pushing Work on Shamrock III.

Glasgow, Feb. 21.—Large gangs of workmen are rapidly pushing the completion of the Shamrock III. The challenger is designed to carry less sail than any challenger since the Valkyrie III. All efforts have been turned to the production of a yacht which will drive easily in all weather, especially in turning to windward through a head sea, and lack of which quality proved fatal to Shamrock II. All the hollow steel spars are practically finished. The riggers are rearing the running and standing gear.

## DIED IN FLAMES

Nine Cremated and 42 Injured in Iowa Hotel Fire.

BUILDING WAS VERITABLE FIRETRAP

Burning of Register Makes Loss of Life Uncertain—Guests Forced to Leap from Windows by Flames.

Cedar Rapids, Ia., Feb. 23.—Fire early this morning destroyed the Clifton hotel, cremated nine of the guests and caused injuries to 42 other persons, who were scorched or forced to jump to the frozen street from the second and third story windows. After an all-day search in the debris, four bodies have been recovered. It is now believed that five more bodies remain in the ruins of the hotel. The building was crowded with delegates to the State Young Men's Christian Association convention and the district convention of the Knights of Pythias. The hotel register was burned, making it difficult to ascertain the number of missing persons. Forty men have been working in the ruins all day, and will continue to dig for the remains of the burned persons all night. The property loss is \$69,000.

The hotel, a three-story brick, is said to have been a veritable firetrap. The flames started in a pile of rubbish in the basement, presumably ignited by defective electric light wires. The night clerk was on the third floor when the cry of fire, raised by a bell boy, startled him. He took up the cry and in an instant the hallways were choked with frightened guests. A rush was made for the hallways and stairways. It was then that the crowd already collected in the street heard heartrending cries of anguish and desperation, for the fire, feeding rapidly and ravenously on the tinder-like material of the lower floor, had completely cut off escape. There followed a stampede for the windows, the only means of exit left. The streets below were now filled and the crowd was scarcely less frantic than the despairing ones in the fast burning building.

The victims were literally driven by the flames to jump. Nearly every one of them lingered to the last moment, urged by the people below to wait as long as possible in the hope of assistance. Then a cry would tell that the fire had reached them or the smoke had made it impossible to breathe, and one after another jumped, some to the street, and some, more fortunate, to the roofs of buildings adjoining. In a short space of time the street was filled with men and women, bruised, battered, broken-limbed and half-crazed. All were in their night garments.

## CUBA WILL HURRY TREATY.

Her Senate Will Ratify Immediately, that Congress May Also Act.

Washington, Feb. 24.—Herbert C. Squiers, minister to Cuba, arrived here tonight direct from Havana, and had an audience with Secretary Hay. Mr. Squiers said his mission here is to "clean up" certain matters connected with the Platt amendment. Awaiting him at his hotel was a cablegram stating that the Cuban congress will take up the consideration of the reciprocity treaty at once and Mr. Squiers expressed the opinion that it would be ratified during the present week.

It was learned tonight that this treaty would have been acted upon sooner, but the Cuban government was awaiting action by the United States senate. Now, however, that the matter has been delayed, the Cuban government will use every means in its power to expedite action on the treaty in the hope of favorable action by the United States senate.

## Street Car Held Up.

Los Angeles, Feb. 23.—The daring deeds of highwaymen, who seem to have invaded Los Angeles in force, came to a climax tonight when two unmasked men held up and robbed a carload of passengers of the Los Angeles-Pasadena electric line. Thirty-two passengers, one half of whom were women, were forced at the muzzle of revolvers to surrender cash and jewelry to the amount of between \$500 and \$700. The robbers performed their work leisurely but effectively. The car was held for 10 minutes. The men then left it and disappeared in the darkness. The hold-up was carried out in a way that marked the two outlaws as old hands at the business.

## Coal Oil in Ireland.

Dublin, Feb. 23.—The discovery of oil near Mount Joy Square, in this city, has raised hopes that the old bog land throughout Ireland may prove similarly productive. A sample of Dublin oil, which has been examined by experts, was pronounced to be of good, clear quality. It was discovered in the basement of an ordinary house, built on reclaimed bog land, and it was said that a copious flow has continued since the find was made five weeks ago. Experts attach much importance to the matter.