



THE PLACE OF HONEY-MOONS
 HAROLD MACGRATH
 Pictures
 BY C.D. RHODES

CHAPTER XIV.
 Journey's End.

Harrigan dined alone. He was in disgrace; he was sore, mentally as well as physically; and he ate his dinner without relish, in simple obedience to those well-regulated periods of hunger that assailed him three times a day, in spring, summer, autumn and winter. By the time the waiter had cleared away the dishes, Harrigan had a perfect between his teeth (along with a certain matrimonial bit), and smoked as if he had wagered to finish the cigar in half the usual stretch. He then began to walk the floor, much after the fashion of a man who has the toothache, or the earache, which would be more to the point. To his direct mind no diplomacy was needed; all that was necessary was a few blunt questions. Nora could answer them as she chose. Nora, his baby, his little girl that used to run around barefooted and laugh when he applied the needed birch! How children grew up! And they never grew too old for the birch; they certainly never did.

They heard him from the drawing-room; tramp, tramp, tramp.

"Let him be, Nora," said Mrs. Harrigan, wisely. "He is in a rage about something. And your father is not the easiest man to approach when he's mad. If he fought Mr. Courtlandt, he believed he had some good reason for doing so."

"Mother, there are times when I believe you are afraid of father."

"I am always afraid of him. It is only because I make believe I'm not that I can get him to do anything. It was dreadful. And Mr. Courtlandt was such a gentleman. I could cry. But let your father be until tomorrow."

"And have him wandering about with that black eye? Something must be done for it. I'm not afraid of him."

"Sometimes I wish you were."

So Nora entered the lion's den fearlessly. "Is there anything I can do for you, dad?"

"You can get the witch hazel and bathe this lamp of mine," grimly.

She ran into her own room and returned with the simpler devices for reducing a swollen eye. She did not notice, or pretended that she didn't, that he locked the door and put the key in his pocket. He sat down in a chair, under the light; and she went to work deftly.

"I've got some make-up, and tomorrow morning I'll paint it for you."

"You don't ask any questions," he said, with grimness.

"Would it relieve your eye any?" lightly.

He laughed. "No; but it might relieve my mind."

"Well, then, why did you do so foolish a thing? At your age! Don't you know that you can't go on whipping every man you take a dislike to?"

"I haven't taken any dislike to Courtlandt. But I saw him kiss you. I can take care of myself."

"Perhaps. I asked him to explain. He refused. One thing puzzled me, though I didn't know what it was at the time. Now, when a fellow steals a kiss from a beautiful woman like you, Nora, I don't see why he should feel mad about it. When he had all but knocked your daddy to by-by, he said that you could explain."

"Don't press so hard," warningly.

"Well, can you?"

"Since you saw what he did, I do not see where explanations on my part are necessary."

"Nora, I've never caught you in a lie. I never want to. When you were little you were the truthfulest thing I ever saw. No matter what kind of a licking was in store for you, you weren't afraid; you told the truth."

There, that'll do. Put some cotton over it and bind it with a handkerchief. It'll be black all right, but the swelling will go down. I can tell 'em a tennis ball hit me. It was more like a cannon ball, though. Say, Nora, you know I've always poo-bushed these amateurs. People used to say that there were dozens of men in New York in my prime who could

have laid me cold. I used to laugh. Well, I guess they were right. Courtlandt's got the stiffest kick I ever ran into. A pile driver, and if he had landed on my jaw, it would have been dornel bene as you say when you bid me good night in dago. That's all right now until tomorrow. I want to talk to you. Draw up a chair. There! As I said, I've never caught you in a lie, but I find that you've been living a lie for two years. You haven't been square to me, nor to your mother, nor to the chaps that came around and made love to you. You probably didn't look at it that way, but there's the fact. I'm not Paul Pry; but accidentally I came across this," taking the document from his pocket and handing it to her. "Read it. What's the answer?"

Nora's hands trembled.

"Takes you a long time to read it. Is it true?"

"Yes."

"And I went up to the tennis court with the intention of knocking his head off; and now I'm wondering why he didn't knock off mine. Nora, he's a man; and when you get through with this, I'm going down to the hotel and apologize."

"You will do nothing of the sort; not with that eye."

"All right. I was always worried for fear you'd hook up with some duke you'd have to support. Now, I want to know how this chap happens to be my son-in-law. Make it brief, for I don't want to get tangled up more than is necessary."

Nora cracked the certificate in her fingers and stared unseeingly at it for some time. "I met him first in Rangoon," she began slowly, without raising her eyes.

"When you went around the world on your own?"

"Yes. Oh, don't worry. I was always able to take care of myself."

"An Irish idea," answered Harrigan complacently.

"I loved him, father, with all my heart and soul. He was not only big and strong and handsome, but he was kindly and tender and thoughtful. Why, I never knew that he was rich until after I had promised to be his wife. When I learned that he was the Edward Courtlandt who was always getting into the newspapers, I laughed. There were stories about his escapades. There were innuendoes regarding certain women, but I put them out of my mind as twaddle. Ah,

"Hang it, Nora, this doesn't sound like him!"

"I saw her."

"He wrote you?"

"I returned the letters, unopened."

"That wasn't square. You might have been wrong."

"He wrote five letters. After that he went to India, to Africa and back to India, where he seemed to find consolation enough."

Harrigan laid it to his lack of normal vision, but to his single optic there was anything but misery in her beautiful blue eyes. True, they sparkled with tears; but that signified nothing; he hadn't been married these thirty-odd years without learning that a woman weeps for any of a thousand and one reasons.

"Do you care for him still?"

"Not a day passed during these many months that I did not vow I hated him."

"Anyone else know?"

"The padre. I had to tell some one or go mad. But I didn't hate him. I could no more put him out of my life than I could stop breathing. Ah, I have been so miserable and unhappy!" She laid her head upon his knees and clumsily he stroked it. His girl!

"That's the trouble with us Irish, Nora. We jump without looking, without finding whether we're right or wrong. Well, your daddy's opinion is that you should have read his first letter. If it didn't ring right, why, you could have jumped the traces. I don't believe he did anything wrong at all. It isn't in the man's blood to do anything underboard."

"But I saw her," a queer look in her eyes as she glanced up at him.

"I don't care a kiddle if you did. Take it from me, it was a put-up job by that Calabrian woman. She might have gone to his room for any number of harmless things. But I think she was curious."

"Why didn't she come to me, if she wanted to ask questions?"

"I can see you answering them. She probably just wanted to know if you were married or not. She might have been in love with him, and then she might not. These Italians don't know half the time what they're about, anyhow. But I don't believe it of Courtlandt. He doesn't line up that way. Besides, he's got eyes. You're a thousand times more attractive. He's no fool. Know what I think? As she was coming out she saw you at your door; and the devil in her got busy."

Nora rose, flung her arms around him and kissed him.

"Look out for that tin ear!"

"Oh, you great big, loyal, true-hearted man! Open that door and let me get out to the terrace. I want to sing, sing!"

"He said he was going to Milan in the morning."

She danced to the door and was gone.

"Nora!" he called, impatiently. He listened in vain for the sound of her return. "Well, I'll take the count when it comes to guessing what a woman's going to do. I'll go out and square up with the old girl. Wonder how this news will harness up with her social bug?"



"I Am a Wretch," She Said.

never had I been so happy! In Berlin we went about like two children. It was play. He brought me to the Opera and took me away; and we had the most charming little suppers. I never wrote you or mother because I wished to surprise you."

"You have. Go on."

"I had never paid much attention to Flora Desimone, though I knew that she was jealous of my success. Several times I caught her looking at Edward in a way I did not like."

"She looked at him, huh?"

"It was the last performance of the season. We were married that afternoon. We did not want anyone to know about it. I was not to leave the stage until the end of the following season. We were staying at the same hotel with rooms across the corridor. This was much against his wishes, but I prevailed."

"I see."

"Our rooms were opposite, as I said. After the performance that night I went to mine to complete the final packing. We were to leave at one for the Tyrol. Father, I saw Flora Desimone come out of his room."

Harrigan shut and opened his hands.

"Do you understand? I saw her. She was laughing. I did not see him. My wedding night! She came from his room. My heart stopped, the world stopped, everything went black. All the stories that I had read and heard came back. When he knocked at my door I refused to see him. I never saw him again until that night in Paris when he forced his way into my apartment."

"I am a miserable wretch! I doubt you. I! When all I had to do was to recall the way people misrepresented things I had done! I sent back your letters . . . and read and reread the old blue ones. Don't you remember how you used to write them on blue paper? . . . Flora told me everything. It was only because she hated me, not that she cared anything about you. She told me that night at the ball. She was at the bottom of the abduction. When you kissed me . . . didn't you know that I kissed you back. Edward, I am a miserable wretch, but I shall follow you wherever you go, and I haven't even a vanity box in my handbag!" There were tears in her eyes. "Say that I am a wretch!"

He drew her up beside him. His arms closed around her so hungrily, so strongly, that she gasped a little. He looked into her eyes; his glance traveled here and there over her face, searching for the familiar dimple at one corner of her mouth.

"Nora!" he whispered.

"Kiss me!"

And then the train came to a stand, jerkily. They fell back against the cushions.

"Lecco!" cried the guard through the window.

They laughed like children.

"I bribed him," she said gaily. "And now . . ."

"Yes, and now?" eagerly, if still bewildered.

"Let's go back!"

THE END.

HAVE FIGURES OF ATHLETES

American Business Men of Today Far Better Proportioned Than Those of a Generation Ago.

"The American man, the American business man of forty or forty-five, has got a new shape," said a tailor. "He's got a lean, straight shape—full chest, narrow hips. But if you could have seen him a generation ago!"

"The business man of forty, expected to be fat and soft a generation ago. He rather admired, in fact, a fat, soft shape. The richest business men were fat and soft—and that made a fashion of it—just as Queen Alexandra's lameness made a limp fashionable in Victorian times."

"What stomachs our fathers had at forty or forty-five! Feather-bed stomachs which they balanced by bending backward. A big stomach was a sign of success, a sign of gentility. If you were lean, why, you must be a laborer—perhaps you didn't get enough to eat."

"What is the cause of the slender, agile figures of today? Open air and exercise—that's the cause. Golf is the cause. Motoring is the cause."

"My friend," the tailor impressively ended, "my books show that the middle-aged business man of today is four inches bigger around the chest than the middle-aged business man of 1890, and 18 inches smaller around the stomach."

SMALL TOWNS SHOW DECLINE

While the Country Increases in Population Small Places Have Lost Many Residents.

A striking warning that the towns are losing their population more rapidly than the open country was sounded at the twenty-sixth annual convention in Kansas City of the Southwestern Lumbermen's association, the Survey states. The organization comprise 1,900 retail dealers in Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Nine states were cited in which 6,956 towns lost population, while the population of the whole country increased 21 per cent. Out of 277 county seats in those nine states, 217, or nearly 28 per cent, lost population, although they are the political, administrative and business centers of population.

This decline of the town is greatest in the richest and most thickly settled parts of the nine states. Wisconsin lost population in 346 towns, Missouri in 540, Iowa in 564, Indiana in 639, Michigan in 677, New York in 746, Illinois in 788, Ohio in 1,136, Pennsylvania in 1,520.

Forehanded Beetles.

Several farmers were sitting around the fire in the country inn and telling how the potato pests had got into their crops. Said one:

"Them pests ate my whole crop in two weeks."

Then another spoke up:

"They ate my crop in two days and then sat around on the trees and waited for me to plant more."

Here a commercial traveler for a seed house broke in:

"Well, boys," he said, "that may be so, but I'll tell what I saw in our own warehouse. I saw four or five beetles examining the books about a week before planting time to see who had bought seed."

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"That is a beautiful diamond ring you are wearing. May I ask how much it cost?"

"I paid \$1000 for it."

"One thousand dollars! Why, I did not know you were worth that much money."

"I'm not; but, you see, when my uncle died he made me sole executor, and he left \$1000 for a stone to be erected to his memory, and this is the stone."—St. Louis Post Dispatch.

Wild Pitch.

"I thought you had thrown Arthur over."

"I did, but you know how a girl throws."—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

The allies hope to hem in the foe. Of course, there is truth in the old saw that a stitch in time saves nine.

Same Effect.

Mistress—Are you married?
 Applicant—No'm. I bumped into a door.—Woman's Journal.

The war has some advantages after all, if the people only knew it. It has prevented a lot of international marriages.

Forest fires in the United States cause an annual loss of \$25,000,000.

The queen of Denmark carries 25 hats with her when she goes on vacation trips.

Tobacco Habit Easily Conquered

A New Yorker of wide experience, has written a book telling how the tobacco or snuff habit may be easily and completely banished in three days with delightful benefit. The author, Edward J. Woods, 123 D. Station, E. New York City, will mail his book free on request.

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