

FETTERED BY FATE

BY ALEXANDER ROBERTSON

"Jollette's Fate," "Little Sweetheart," "Lottie, the Sewing Girl," "Goldmaker of Lisbon," "Wedded to Win," "Diana Thorpe," "Nora's Legacy," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

"When you believed that, you were right. Not a soul in the world does know of the fact but your lawyer and Lionel Marsden. See, Lawrence Richmond, do you recognize that document?" and from her bosom she drew a scroll; "It is the paper that takes from you Richmond Terrace, the home of your ancestors. I am the one whom it has pleased to call herself Lionel Marsden."

He stood there mute, his eyes glued upon the precious document. Ah, if it were but destroyed, Richmond Terrace might yet be his, and yet little good it would be for him to do the deed, for beyond a doubt her lawyer had made it secure.

"Mysterious woman, who are you? What cause for enmity have you against me that you hunt me down? Heaven has seen fit to punish me for my great sin, but even she, if she lived, could not look save with pity upon the wreck of the once proud Lawrence Richmond. I keep up a show of pride still, but it is a hollow mockery, for my heart is crushed within, and I am fit only for the grim reaper, Death. The past haunts me, and yet I do not regret it, for I was right. I loved her, oh how dearly, but she was false to me, and I sent her from me."

The old man seemed overcome with these recollections, and apparently forgot that there was any one present. His head had fallen upon his chest, and his whole attitude was one of despair.

Fancy the feelings of his lost wife, standing there in front of him and hearing such a tirade from his lips. It was very evident that Time, healer of many wounds both of body and heart, had failed to entirely alleviate the pain that had lain in the breast of this man.

One little lingering hope had remained, and by this slender thread he was saved from utter darkness. He loved the memory of what his wife had once been to him, even while he hated and cursed that fatal day when they had separated to meet no more. Thus it was the recollection rushing upon him seemed to bewilder his brain.

There that woman stood, with folded hands and eyes full of unshed tears, waiting in an agony of suspense. Something of the truth must have entered her mind, for she did not betray herself. The wrongs of the past, endured at the hands of this man, arose before her mental vision, and the sight must have given her both courage and strength, for she gradually drew her form back until, from a wistful, pleading position, she had assumed the attitude of a queen.

"Madam, you are more than you seem; you hold a power over my head, and can send Lawrence Richmond out into the world almost a beggar, but he never asked a favor of man or woman in his life, and it is too late to begin now. I see you are allied with my enemies, but I defy you; do your worst!"

There was something really heroic in the old man's manner as he folded his arms over his chest and threw back his head. The breeze blew his long white hair fitfully, and added new strength to the picture.

"Heaven forbid that I should wish to harm you. No, no; I have forgiven all. Do you see this document? It is worth a king's ransom. There, it is lost, lost forever!"

As she spoke she turned into the house and hurled the mortgage into the flames of a small fire burning upon the hearth, an operation Lawrence Richmond witnessed with amazement.

"Woman, are you mad? There is a fortune in that paper. It shall never be said a Richmond accepted such a sacrifice from a stranger," and he would have leaped forward to save the document but that she barred the way.

"No, a thousand times no! See it shrivel up. There, Richmond Terrace is yours again."

"Woman, who are you?" he gasped, hoarsely.

"Seek not to know," she replied; but he caught her wrist and turned her to the light.

Proudly she met the blaze of his mad eyes.

"It is my wife! This is retribution. My sin has found me out!" and he fell back, dazed.

CHAPTER XIX.

Bitter tears of anguish wept Carol Richmond on that afternoon when Roger Darrel, the man she had loved and mistrusted, had left her with such scathing words upon his lips.

Never had she even suspected the wealth of love for this man that dwelt within her heart until she saw him standing there alone before her, indignantly defending himself against the charges brought by her, and, while avowing himself as innocent as the unborn babe, repudiating the love she had once given him.

"Oh, heaven!" she cried out in her agony, as she wrung her white hands, "have I not enough to bear already? I am born to woe. Lost to me are father, home and lover, yet thank heaven that in my destination I have found a mother."

In her agonized self-abasement she had sunk upon the ground and let her head fall upon her arms as they rested upon the log. Then she gave full sway to her emotions, and sobbed convulsively for some time.

After a while her emotion spent itself, and she gradually became calm, but it was the calmness that indicated stony despair. She had fallen into a sad, dreamy reverie, when her thoughts were interrupted by the sound of footsteps.

Startled, she looked up, the blood darting into her face as the thought flashed into her mind that perhaps this was Roger

er come back again for a reconciliation.

Her eyes were hot and inflamed from the scalding tears she had shed, but no sooner had they rested upon the figure of the man before her than she uttered a low cry, partly of surprise, partly of fear.

It was Captain Grant. He stood there gloating upon her. The merest accident had led him to the spot in time to hear her sobs, and for some little time he had observed her from the bushes, finally approaching, unable to further keep his peace.

He saw the horror in her face, but it did not alarm him. His was a nature cold and cruel, and the more resistance he met with the more determined he became to accomplish his ultimate end.

This girl seemed to defy him, and he was most firmly resolved that she should be his through fair means or foul, believing, as he did, that she was a great heiress. Perhaps he might have been just as obstinate had he learned of her father's poverty, for Carol was a girl worth winning.

"Carol," he said, subduing his voice, "I have found you at last."

"Well, sir, now that you have found me, what then?"

"You must return home with me, home to the father you left so heartlessly," he replied.

"It was he who was heartless, he who drove me from what has been my home. Think you I would ever have gone but for his cruelty? I promised him I would never marry without his consent, but I did not tell him he could choose my husband for me. I know all, sir—how you held a power over his head and forced him to do this cruel deed, but that does not entirely exonerate him. Why do you ask me, Captain Grant?"

"Because I would take you home again; because I would have you for my wife. In spite of all I am ready to forgive you and take you back again. You see how I love you, girl? You ran away with a man of the world, a man your father had no confidence in, and had refused admission to his house, but I am disposed to be magnanimous and forget it all."

"Indeed! well, no one asked you to be so magnanimous, Captain Grant. I have found a protector against whom even my father could not prevail to give me up."

The Captain uttered a cry.

"My soul! you are not married?" he cried.

"Married! I married? No, I did not mean to imply that. Roger Darrel took me to my mother when he carried me away from the Terrace."

"Your mother! Why, girl, your mother died many years ago, when all the rest of your family went," said the Captain.

"So every one was made to believe, but it was not so. My mother was believed deceitful by her husband, who sent her from him with curses that soon came back to him, for there fell the terrible blow that left him almost childless as well as wifeless. My mother is living, and on her heart I have found the peace that was denied me elsewhere."

"Come, come, this will never do; you must go home with me. Girl, I have sworn to make you my wife either by fair means or foul. Mine you shall be, must be. Do you give in to the working of fate?"

"I hardly know what you mean, Captain Grant. My poor brain has received so many blows of late that I seem to be in a species of daze the while; but if it is your intention to push the dastardly act in which you were engaged on that night when I was saved at the last minute from your wolfish power by the bravery of the only true friend I had left, then I will tell you it can never be."

She spoke calmly, and in a manner that carried the conviction of her firmness, but the only result was to cause the usually cool Captain to grow excited.

"Say not so, Carol. Do you not know that your father's wishes are bound up in this affair? I hold a dreadful secret over his head, and should I let it fall, he is a ruined man, not financially, I do not mean that, but in the eyes of the law he becomes a felon."

"A felon!"

"Yes, a felon, a murderer!"

"Oh, what is this you are telling me? It cannot be; it cannot be. Captain Grant, if you had the heart of a man you would never persecute a poor girl in this way. You will drive me to despair," she wailed.

"On the contrary, it is you who will drive me to despair. You have bewitched me by your beauty until I would risk torments to win you. Why not yield to fate? Surely you can struggle but little longer. Come, give me a fair answer, Carol."

"Can you not be merciful, sir? My father has never wronged you; why bring him into the matter? Why did you not woo me as other men might, and, if heaven decreed that it should not be, accept the decree with fortitude?"

"Because," he replied, with a sneer, "I saw the game was too well decided when I came, and that only by some superhuman agency could you be saved from throwing yourself away on that villain of a Roger Darrel."

"Hush, sir, do not bring him into the present matter."

"I would that he had never been in it, and then all might have been plain sailing for me. Come, girl, your answer."

"It is easily given. Once before I came near yielding to your wishes because of a false idea of duty toward my father. Thank heaven, I was saved from the pit by one who knew far better than I the wrong that was being put upon me. Since then I have found my mother and learned her story. I still love my father, and

would do much for him, but I cannot, will not, make the sacrifice of my life, my happiness, for the sake of the man who sent his innocent wife from him, and has since braved heaven itself."

He seized her wrist in an iron clasp, and his eyes were fastened upon hers with the fascinating glare of a serpent's. She seemed charmed, powerless to move, and could only look into his scintillating orbs and shudder.

"Hands off, you villain!"

The voice was not that of a man, and, dropping the wrist of Carol, Captain Grant turned like lightning to the spot from whence it had come. Then a cry fell from his lips—the cry of a baffled conspirator almost driven to the wall: "Barbara Merriles!" he gasped.

CHAPTER XX.

It was in truth the gypsy girl who stood there—she whom Captain Grant had seen go over the terrible precipice, and whose body he supposed had been crushed out of all shape upon the jagged rocks far below, or swept away by the restless waters of the Potomac.

True, he had not hurled her over, but it had been because of him she had fallen, and when he might have saved her he would not raise his hand, so that he was at heart a murderer ever since, and the sight of her standing there alive and in the flesh gave him such a shock as he had not experienced for many a day.

The tableau was quite a dramatic one for about the space of a minute, none of the three moving a particle. During this while, however, the arch schemer was rapidly recovering himself, and that meant much.

He knew that Barbara had not come there without a purpose, and, although he had cause to fear her, he was just the man to brave it all through, trusting to fortune to clear him in the end.

Therefore he faced her boldly, and, in a way that staggered Barbara, who had fully expected him to cower at sight of her, and perhaps slink out of sight like a whipped cur. She ought to have known that was not his way of doing business.

Had he been married a dozen times, he would have faced the whole of his wives unflinchingly, and have denied them all with the same cool, sneering manner which he could assume so well.

The first words of the gypsy reassured Carol, and she learned much of which she had been ignorant before.

"Lady, you remember that when last we met I warned you against your lover, and told you that he was a scoundrel of the first water, that he had terribly wronged me in the past, and that he had a wife in the mad-house—one Nora Warner. Though I knew it not at the time, I was wronging both you and an honorable man, but I thought this man who now stands before you was your lover, and not the other. Can you ever forgive me for such a mistake, lady?"

Before Carol could reply, the Captain broke in with a harsh laugh.

"You must be crazy, girl. Why, I never set eyes on you before. What do you mean by coming here and intruding yourself upon our presence unasked? Go! leave this spot at once, or I will find a means to make you. I would not hesitate a minute about giving you in charge, and having you locked up as a mad woman."

"I believe you, villain. Perhaps the time has not yet come for your downfall, but it is close at hand, never fear. You thought me dead, but heaven spared my life most miraculously, not because it was worth most to me, but in order that I might become an avenging Nemesis, to track you down to your doom. Oh, man, foul wretch that you are, when you remember the cruel, heartless deeds of the past, and then look upon the face of this pure girl, does not your heart reproach you?"

Again he laughed, this time coldly.

"You are pleased to be melodramatic, I see. There is nothing in my past to make me shudder when I look upon the face of this young girl, whom I hope to make my wife."

"Your wife? Never! Think you heaven would permit you to accomplish such a fiendish act? Remember my words, Roger Darrel, for I shall haunt you like a shadow," and the gypsy vanished among the trees like an evil sprite.

"Roger Darrel! Surely she must be out of her mind to call you by his name. Perhaps she has mistaken you for him; there is a certain resemblance which I have sometimes noticed," said Carol, after the gypsy girl had gone.

The crisis had come and passed, and she was deeper in the mire than ever. Captain Grant was quick to see this, and he smiled.

"You are right, Carol, the girl is mad. It seems to me every one almost has gone crazy of late. Only the other day I was forced into a duel by an unknown party who proclaimed herself my wife and called herself Nora Warner, and declared I was Roger Darrel. I wish I was, I declare; then I would go and hang myself for having injured so many people and caused them to curse my name."

She buried her face in her hands as though she could not bear to hear him talk so of the one she loved so well. Nothing could cause her to doubt Roger again, but at the same time she was now placed in a position where she dared not think of him.

Strange that Roger's words did not occur to her. "We shall meet once more, and when you see me as the man I am, and not in the guise of a villain who chances to belong to my family and bear my name, then perhaps you will deign to offer me your forgiveness."

(To be continued.)

Selecting a Motto.

"So, my brave boy," said the veteran, "you are going into the army?" "I am," answered the high-browed youth. "My motto shall be 'Excelsior!'" "Don't adopt any such motto as that." "Well, then, 'Conquer or die!'"

"No." "What would you suggest?" "Think before you speak."—Washington Star.

Daylight and truth meet us with clear dawn.—Milton.



Mrs. Tupman, a prominent lady of Richmond, Va., a great sufferer with woman's troubles, tells of her cure by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—For some years I suffered with backache, severe bearing-down pains, leucorrhœa, and falling of the womb. I tried many remedies, but nothing gave any positive relief."

"I commenced taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound in June, 1901. When I had taken the first half bottle, I felt a vast improvement, and have now taken ten bottles with the result that I feel like a new woman. When I commenced taking the Vegetable Compound I felt all worn out and was fast approaching complete nervous collapse. I weighed only 98 pounds. Now I weigh 109½ pounds and am improving every day. I gladly testify to the benefits received."—Mrs. R. C. TUPMAN, 423 West 30th St., Richmond, Va.

When a medicine has been successful in more than a million cases, is it justice to yourself to say, without trying it, "I do not believe it would help me"?

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"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I must say that I do not believe there is any female medicine to compare with Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and I return to you my heartfelt thanks for what your medicine has done for me. Before taking the Vegetable Compound I was so badly off that I thought I could not live much longer. The little work I had to do was a burden to me. I suffered with irregular menstruation and leucorrhœa, which caused an irritation of the parts. I looked like one who had consumption, but I do not look like that now, and I owe it all to your wonderful medicine."

"I took only six bottles, but it has made me feel like a new person. I thank God that there is such a female helper as you."

Be it, therefore, believed by all women who are ill that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is the medicine they should take. It has stood the test of time, and it has hundreds of thousands of cures to its credit. Women should consider it unwise to use any other medicine.

Mrs. Pinkham, whose address is Lynn, Mass., will answer cheerfully and without cost all letters addressed to her by sick women. Perhaps she has just the knowledge that will help your case—try her to-day—it costs nothing.

\$5000 FORFEIT if we cannot forthwith produce the original letters and signatures of above testimonials, which will prove their absolute genuineness. Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass.

Assyrian Records.

Layard in his "History of Nineveh" mentions that the national records of the Assyrian empire were written on bricks in characters so minute as to be scarcely legible without the aid of a microscope and that, in fact, a variety of this instrument was found among the excavations.

Mrs. A.—Your husband smoking again! Why, I thought you insisted that he should give it up. Mrs. Z.—I did, dear, but then I found such a pretty smoking-jacket at a bargain sale.—Chicago Daily News.

Coughing

"I was given up to die with quick consumption. I then began to use Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. I improved at once, and am now in perfect health."—Chas. E. Hartman, Gibbstown, N. Y.

It's too risky, playing with your cough. The first thing you know it will be down deep in your lungs and the play will be over. Begin early with Ayer's Cherry Pectoral and stop the cough.

Three sizes: 25c., 50c., \$1. All druggists.

Consult your doctor. If he says take it, then do as he says. If he tells you not to take it, then don't take it. He knows. Leave it with him. We are willing. J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.

Taking Things.

"I always take things as they come," said the pickpocket as he dexterously relieved the man ahead of him of a watch and purse.

"And I take men as I find them," added the policeman, clutching him gently but firmly by the arm.

Bay of Apia Fish.

In the bay of Apia, in Samoa, a surveying party has discovered 453 distinct specimens of fish.

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