

The VALIANTS of VIRGINIA

By HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES

ILLUSTRATIONS by LAUREN STOUT



SYNOPSIS.

John Vallant, a rich society favorite, suddenly discovers that the Vallant corporation, which his father founded and which was the principal source of his wealth, has failed. He voluntarily turns over his private fortune to the receiver for the corporation. His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a white bull dog and Damory court, a neglected estate in Virginia. On the way to Damory court he meets Shirley Dandridge, an auburn-haired beauty, and decides that he is going to like Virginia immensely. Shirley's mother, Mrs. Dandridge, and Major Bristow exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the major, Vallant's father, and a man named Sassoon were rivals for the hand of Mrs. Dandridge in her youth. Sassoon and Vallant fought a duel on her account in which the former was killed. Vallant finds Damory court overgrown with weeds and croppers and decides to rehabilitate the place. Vallant saves Shirley from the bite of a snake, which bites him. Knowing the deadliness of the bite, Shirley sucks the poison from the wound and saves his life. Vallant learns for the first time that his father left Virginia on account of a duel in which Doctor Southall and Major Bristow acted as his father's seconds. Vallant and Shirley become good friends. Mrs. Dandridge faints when she meets Vallant for the first time. Vallant discovers that he has a fortune in old walnut trees. The yearly tournament, a survival of the fittest of feudal times, is held at Damory court. At the last moment Vallant takes the place of one of the knights, who is sick, and enters the lists. He wins and chooses Shirley Dandridge as queen of beauty to the dismay of Katharine Fargo, a former sweetheart, who is visiting in Virginia. The tournament ball at Damory court draws the elite of the countryside.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Continued.

To the twanging of the deft black fingers, they passed in gorgeous array between files of low-cut gowns and flower-like faces and masculine swallow-tails, to the yellow parlor. Once there the music ceased with a splendid crash, the eleven knights each dropped upon one knee, the eleven ladies-in-waiting curtseied low, and Shirley, seated upon the dais, leaned her burnished head to receive the crown. What though the bauble was but bristow-board, its jeweled chasing but tinsel and paste? On her head it glowed and trembled, a true diadem. As Vallant set the glittering thing on those rich and wonderful coils, the music of her presence was singing a swift melody in his blood.

His coronation address held no such flowery periods as would have rolled from the major's soul. He had chosen for a single paragraph he had lighted on in an old book in the library—a history of the last Crusade in French black-letter. He had translated and memorized the quaint phrasing, keeping the quaint feeling of the original: "These noble knights bow in your presence, fair lady, as their leige, whom they know as even in judgment, as dainty in fulfilling these our acts of arms, and do recommend their all unto your Good Grace in as lowly wise as they can. O queen, in whom the whole story of virtue is written with the language of beauty, your eyes, which have been only wont to discern the bowed knees of kneeling hearts and, inwardly turned, found always the heavenly solace of a sweet mind, see them, ready in heart and able with hands not only to assailing but to prevailing."

A hushed rustle of applause—not loud; the merest whisper of silken feet and feathered fans tapped softly—testified to a widespread approbation. It was the first sight many there had had of John Vallant and in both looks and manner he fitted their best ideals. The queen's curtsy was the signal for the music, which throbbed suddenly into a march, and she stepped down beside him. Couple after couple, knights and ladies, ranged behind them, till the twenty-four stood ready for the royal quadrille. It was the old-fashioned lancers, but the deliberate strain lent the familiar measures something of the stately effect of the minuet.

Quadrilles were not invented as aids to conversation, and John Vallant's and Shirley's was necessarily limited. "The decorations are simply delicious!" she said as they faced each other briefly. "How did you manage it?"

"Home talent with a vengeance. Uncle Jefferson and I did it with our little hatchets. But the roses—"

They were swooped apart and Shirley found herself curtsying to Chilly Lusk. "More than queen!" he said under his breath. "I had my heart set on naming you today. I reckon I've lost my rabbit-foot!"

Opposite, in turn, Betty Page had slipped her dainty hand in John Vallant's. "Ah haven't seen such a lovely dance for years!" she sighed. "Isn't Shirley too sweet? If Ah had hair like hers, Ah wouldn't speak to a soul on earth!"

The exigencies of the figure gave no space for answer, and presently, after certain labyrinthine evolutions, Shirley's eyes were gazing into his again. "How adorable you look!" he whispered, as he bowed over her hand. "How does it feel to be a queen?"

"This little head was never made to wear a crown," she laughed. "Queens should be regal. Miss Fargo would have—"

The music swept the rest away, but not the look of blinding reproach he gave her that made her heart throb wildly as she glided on.

moonlighted garden at Rosewood, she had lain in his arm for one brief instant then she had seemed like some trapped wood-thrill resisting. Now, her slender body swaying to his every motion, she was another creature. Under the drooping tawny hair her face was almost as pale as the white satin of her gown; her lips were parted, and as they moved, he could feel her heart rise and fall to her languorous breath.

CHAPTER XXV.

By the Sun-Dial.

Eyes arched with fan-shielded whippers, and fair faces, foreshortened as they turned back over powder-white shoulders, followed their swallow-like movement. From an ever-widening circle of masculine devotees Katharine Fargo watched them with a smile that cloaked an increasing and unwelcome question.

Katharine had never looked more handsome; a critical survey of her mirror at Gladden Hall had assured her of that. Never had her poise been more superb, her toilet more enrapturing. She was exquisitely gowned in rose-colored mousseline-de-sole, embroidered in tiny brilliants laid on in Greek patterns. From her neck, in a single splendid loop of iridescence against the rosy mist, depended those fabulous pearls—"the kind you simply can't believe," as Betty Page confided to her partner—on whose newspaper reproduction (actual diameter) metropolitan shop-girls had been wont to gaze with glistening eyes; and within their milky circle, on her rounded breast, trembled three pale gold-veined orchids.

Watching that quadrille through her drooping emerald-tinted eyes, she had received a sudden enlightening impression of Shirley's flawless beauty. At the tournament her fleeting glimpse had adjudged the other merely sweetly pretty. The Chalmers' surly had stopped en route for Shirley, but in her wraps and veil she had then been all but invisible. 'Tis had been Katharine's first adequate view, and the sight of her radiant charm had the effect almost of a blow.

For Katharine, be it said, had wholly surrendered to the old, yet new, attraction that had swept her on the tourney field. And what had lain all ways in the back of her mind as a half-formed intention, had become a self-admitted purpose during the motor ride.

In another moment the waltz faltered out, to be succeeded by a duet-fainted, and presently the host, in his crimson cloak, was doffing his plumed hat before her. Circling the polished floor in the maze, there was something gratefully like former days in the assured touch, the true and ready guidance. The intrusive question faded. He was the John Vallant she had always known, of flashing repartee and graceful compliment, yet with a touch of dignity, too—as befitted the lord of a manor—which sat well upon him. After a decorous dozen of rounds, she took his arm and allowed her perfect



Katharine Had Never Looked More Handsome.

figure to be conducted through the various rooms of the ground floor, chatting in quite the old-time way, till a new gallant claimed her.

The mellow strings made on their merry tune, and at length the Washington Post marched all in flushed unity of purpose to the great muslin-walled porch with its array of tables groaning under viands concocted by Aunt Daphne for the delectation of the palate-weary.

And then once more the waltz-strain supervened and in the yellow parlor joy was again unconfined.

Again Vallant claimed Katharine and they glided off on "The Beautiful Danube." Her paleness now had a tinge of color, but nevertheless he thought she drooped. "You are tired," he said, "shan't we sit it out?"

"Oh, do you mind?" she responded gratefully. "It has been a fairly strenuous day, hasn't it?"

He guided her to a corridor, where branches of rhododendron screened an alcove of settees and seductive cushions. Here, her weariness seemed put to rout. There was no drooping of fringed lids, no disconcerting silences; she chattered with ease and piquancy.

"I have been listening to paean all the evening," she said. "And you deserve them. It's a fine big thing you are attempting—the restoring of this old estate. And I know you have even bigger plans, too."

He nodded, suddenly serious and thoughtful. "There's a lot I'd like to do. It's not only the house and grounds. There are . . . other things. For instance, back on the mountain—on my own land—is a settlement they call Hell's-Half-Acre. Probably it has well earned the name. It's a wretched collection of hovels and surly men and drabs of women and unkempt children, the poorest of poor-whites. Not one of them can read or write, and they live like animals. If I'm ever able, I mean to put a manual-training school up there. And then—"

He ended with a half laugh, suddenly conscious that he was talking in a language she would scarcely understand—in fact, in a tongue new to himself. But there was no smile on her lips and her extraordinary eyes—cool gray, shot through with emerald—were looking into his with a frankness and sympathy he would not have guessed lay beneath her glacial placidity.

To Katharine, indeed, it made little difference what philanthropic fads the man she had chosen might affect as regarded his tenantry. Ambitions like these had a manorial flavor that did not displease her. And the Fargo millions would bear such harmless hammering. A change, subtle and incommunicable, passed over her.

"I shall think of you," she sighed, "as working on in this splendid program. For it is splendid. But New York will miss you, John."

"Ah, no. I've no delusions on that score. I dare say I'm almost forgotten there already. Here I have a place."

Her head, leaned back against the cushion, turned toward him, the pale orchids trembling on her bosom—she was so near that he could feel her breath on his cheek. A new waltz had begun to sigh its languorous measures.

"Place?" she queried. "Do you think you had no place there? Is it possible that you do not understand that your going has left—a void?"

He looked at her suddenly, and her eyes fell. Before he answered, however, the big form of Major Bristow appeared, looking about him.

"It has—left a void," she said, her eyes still downcast, her voice just low enough, "for me."

The major pounced upon them at this juncture, feelingly accusing John of the nefarious design of robbing the assemblage of its bright and particular star. When Katharine put her hand in her cavalier's arm, her eyes were dewy under their long shading lashes and her fine lips ever so little tremulous. It had been her best available moment, and she had used it.

As she moved away, her faint color slightly heightened, she was glad of the interruption. It was better as it was. When John Vallant came to her again.

But to him, as he stood watching her move lightly from him, there was vouchsafed illumination. It came to him suddenly that that placidity and hauteur which he had so admired in the old days were no mask for fires within. The exquisite husk was the real Katharine. Hers was the loveliness of some tall white lily cut in marble, splendid but chill. And with the thought, between him and her there swept through the shimmering candle-lighted air a breath of wet rose-fragrance like an impalpable cloud, and set in the midst of it a misty startled gown sprayed with lilies-of-the-valley, and above it a girl's face clear and vivid, her deep shadow-blue eyes fixed on his.

The music of a two-step was languishing when, a little later, Vallant and Shirley strolled down between the garden box-hedges, cypress-shaped and lifting spire-like toward a sky which bent, a silent canopy of mauve and purplish blue. Behind them Damory court lay a nest of woven music and laughter. The long white-muslin porch shimmered goldenly, and beside it under the lanterns dallied a flirtatious couple or two, ghost-like in the shadows.

"Come," he said. "Let me take you to see the sun-dial now."

The tangle had been cut away and a narrow gravel-path led through the pruned creepers. She made an exclamation of delight. The onyx-pillar stood in an oasis of white—moonflowers, white dahlias, magnonette and narcissus; bars of late lilies-of-the-valley beyond these, bordered with Arum-lilies, white clematis, lilies and bridal-wreath, shading out into tender pale hues that ringed the spotless purity like dawning passion.

"Write for happiness," he quoted. "You said that when you brought me here—the day we planted the ramblers. Do you remember what I said? That some day, perhaps, I should love that spot the best of all at Damory court." He was silent a moment, tracing with his finger the motto on the dial's rim. "When I was very little," he went on—"hardly more than three years old, I think—my father and I had a play, in which we lived in a great mansion like this. It was called

Wishing House, and it was in the middle of the Never-Never Land—a sort of beautiful fairy country in which everything happened right. I know now that the Never-Never Land was Virginia, and that Wishing House was Damory court. No wonder my father loved it! No wonder his memory turned back to it always! I've wanted to make it as it was when he lived here. And I want the old dial to count happy hours for me.

Something had crept into his tone that struck her with a strange sweet terror and tumult of mind. The hand that clutched her skirts about her knees had begun to tremble and she caught the other hand to her cheek in a vague hesitant gesture. The moonflowers seemed to be great round eyes staring up at her.

"Shirley—" he said, and now his voice was shaken with longing—"will you make my happiness for me?" She was standing perfectly still against the sun dial, both hands, laced together, against her breast, her eyes on his with a strange startled look. Over the hush of the garden now, like the very soul of the passionate night, throbbed the haunting barcarole of "Tales of Hoffmann."

"Night of stars and night of love—" an inarticulate echo of his longing. He took a step toward her, and she turned like one in sudden terror seeking a way of escape. But he caught her close in his arms.

"I love you!" he said. "Hear it now in my bride's garden that I've made for you! I love you, I love you!" For one instant she struggled. Then, slowly, her eyes turned to his, the sweet lips trembling, and something dawning deep in the dewy blue that turned all his leaping blood to quicksilver. "My darling!" he breathed, and their lips met.

In that delirious moment both had the sense of divine completion that comes only with love returned. For him there was but the woman in his arms, the one woman created for him since the foundation of the world. It was Kismet. For this fate had come to Virginia. For this fate had turned and twisted a thousand ways. Through the riot of his senses, like a silver blaze, ran the legend of the calendar: "Every man carries his fate upon a ribband about his neck." For her, something seemed to pass from her soul with that kiss, some deep irrevocable thing, shy but fiercely strong, that had sprung to him at that lip-contact as steel to magnet. The foliage about them flared up in green light and the ground under her feet rose and fell like deep sea-waves.

She lifted her face to him. It was deathly pale, but the light that burned on it was lit from the whitest altars of southern girlhood. "Six weeks ago," she whispered, "you had never seen me!"

He held her crushed to him. She could feel his heart thudding madly. "I've always known you," he said. "I've seen you a thousand times. I saw you coming to meet me down a cherry-blossomed lane in Kyoto. I've seen your eyes peering from behind a veil in India. I've heard your voice calling to me, through the padding camel's feet, from the desert mirages. You are the dream I have gone searching always! Ah, Shirley, Shirley, Shirley!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Doctor Speaks.

While the vibrant strings hummed and sang through the roses, and the couples drifted on tireless and content, or blissfully "sat out" dances on the stairway, Katharine Fargo held her stately court no less gaily for the stealthy doubt that was creeping over



MADE HIM FEEL LONESOME

Sam Blythe, on the Water Wagon. Found That He Had No One to Play With.

Two years ago Sam Blythe, the writer, elected to mount the water cart. He became boastfully, painfully, selfishly arid. For a time false friends tried to lure him back into the shackles—between September 15, 1911, and June 23, 1912, he received 418 bottles of whisky from 312 persons—but they finally gave it up as a bad job. The other day Blythe was talking with two serfs of the demon at the Waldorf. By and by their mania came upon them. They began to edge toward the bar.

"Well, Sam, see you later," they said.

"No," said Blythe. "Dunno. You may not care to have me in your little party, but I am going right along. I will drink water, or buttermilk, or ginger ale, or any non-alcoholic thing you say, but I am not going to stay out here all alone."

"Why, Sam, you're welcome," said the bond slaves, fecally.

her spirit. She had been so certain of what would happen that evening that when her father (between cigars on the porch with Judge Chalmers and Doctor Southall) had searched her out under a flag-of-truce, she had sent him to the right-about, laughingly declining to depart before royalty. But number followed number, and the knight in purple and gold had not paused again before her. Now the scarlet cloak no longer flaunted among the dancers, and the white satin gown and sparkling coronal had disappeared. The end of the next "round-dance" found her subsiding into the flower-banked alcove suddenly distracted amid her escort's sallies. It was at this moment that she saw, entering the corridor from the garden, the missing couple.

It was not the faint flush on Shirley's cheek—that was not deep—nor was it his nearness to her, though they stood close, as lovers might. But there was in both their faces a something that resurgent conventionality had not had time to cover—a trembling reflection of that "light that never was, on sea or land"—which was like a death-stab to what lay far deeper than Katharine's heart, her pride. She drew swiftly back, dismayed at the sudden verification, and for an instant her whole body chilled.

A craving for a glass of water had served its purpose a thousand times; as her cavalier solicitously departed to fetch the cooling draught, she rose, and carelessly humming the refrain the music had just left off, sauntered lightly out by another door to the open air. A swift glance about her showed her she was unobserved and she stepped down to the grass and along the winding path to a bench at some distance in the shrubbery. Here the smiling mask slipped from her face and with a shiver she dropped her hot face in her hands.

There were no tears. The wave that was welling over her was one of bitter humiliation. She had shot her bolt and missed—she, Katharine Fargo! For three years she had held John Vallant, romantically speaking in the hollow of her shapely hand. Now she had all but thrown herself at his feet—and he had turned away to this flame-haired, vivid girl whom he had not known as many months!

Heavy footfalls all at once approached her—two men were coming from the house. There was the spitting crackle of a match, and as she peered out, its red flare lighted the massive face and floating hair of Major Bristow. His companion's face was in the shadow. She waited, thinking they would pass; but to her annoyance, when she looked again, they had seated themselves on a bench a few paces away.

To be found mooning in the shrubbery like a schoolgirl did not please her, but it seemed there was no recourse, and she had half arisen, when the major's gruff-voiced companion spoke a name that caused her to sit down abruptly.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Sometimes Thus.

That cry in a London paper of a journalist who "finds it impossible to maintain that appearance so essential in his profession" carries one back to the past with a jerk. Back to the days when appearance was not always "so essential" to the writer. One recalls Samuel Boyse, a contemporary of Johnson, for instance, who worked only when his clothes were in pawn. His dress pledged, he would spend a few shillings thus acquired on meat to eat with his truffles and mushrooms and then take to his bed. There he would get under a blanket, slit to allow free play of his pen hand, and start work with a will.

ATTORNEYS.

D. P. FORBETH
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
BELLEFONTE, PA.
Office North of Court House.

HARRISON WALKER
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
BELLEFONTE, PA.
No. 10 W. High Street
All professional business promptly attended to.

I. D. OWEN Jno. J. BOWEN W. B. LINDSEY
ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW
Bellefonte, Pa.
Consultation in English and German.

G. S. SPANGLER
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
BELLEFONTE, PA.
Practices in all the courts. Consultation in English and German. Office, Orler's Exchange Building.

ELEMENT DALE
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
BELLEFONTE, PA.
Office E. W. corner Diamond, two doors from First National Bank.

Penns Valley Banking Company
Centre Hall, Pa.
DAVID K. KELLER, Cashier
Receives Deposits . . .
& Discounts Notes . . .

50 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

PATENTS

TRADE MARKS
DESIGNS
COPYRIGHTS &c.

Anyone sending a sketch and description may quickly ascertain our opinion free whether an invention is probably patentable. Communications strictly confidential. Handbooks on Patents sent free. Oldest agency for securing patents. Patents taken through Munn & Co. secure special notice, without charge, in the Scientific American.

A handsomely illustrated weekly. Largest circulation of any scientific journal. Terms, \$3 a year in advance. Sold by all newspapers.

MUNN & Co., 361 Broadway, New York

Jno. F. Gray & Son
(Successors to GRANT HOOPER)

Control Sixteen of the Largest Fire and Life Insurance Companies in the World. . . .

THE BEST IS THE CHEAPEST

No Mutual No Assessment

Before insuring your life see the contract of THE HOME which in case of death between the tenth and twentieth years returns all premiums paid in addition to the face of the policy.

Money to Loan on First Mortgage

Office in Orler's Stone Building BELLEFONTE, PA.
Telephone Connection

MARBLE AND GRANITE MONUMENTS.

H. G. STROHMEIER.

Centre Hall, Pa.

Manufacturer of and Dealer in HIGH GRADE . . . MONUMENTAL WORK in all kinds of Marble and Granite. Don't fail to get my prices.

BOALSBERG TAVERN

BOALSBERG, PA.
ANNE ROSS, PROPRIETOR

This well-known hostelry is prepared in accordance with the highest standards of the hotel industry. Every effort is made to accommodate the traveling public. All ways prepared for the transient trade.

OLD PORT HOTEL

EDWARD ROYER, Proprietor. BELLEFONTE, PA. \$1.50 Per Day

Location: One mile south of Centre Hall. Accommodations first-class. Parties wishing to enjoy an evening given special attention. Meals for such occasions prepared on short notice. All ways prepared for the transient trade.

DR. SOL. M. NISSLEY,
VETERINARY SURGEON.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. Office at Palace Livery Stable, Bellefonte, Pa. Both phones.