



# The VALIANTS of VIRGINIA

By HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES  
ILLUSTRATIONS by LAUREN STOUT  
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### 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 Bristol exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the man named Vallant, 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 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 Bristol 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 jousting of feudal times, is held at Damory court. 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 Katherine Fargo, a former sweetheart, who is visiting in Virginia. The tournament ball at Damory court draws the elite of the countryside. Shirley is crowned by Vallant as queen of beauty. Vallant tells Shirley of his love and they become engaged.

### CHAPTER XXVI.—Continued.

"Bristow, Shirley's a magnificent girl."  
"Finest in seven counties," agreed the major's bass.  
"Whom do you reckon she'll choose to marry?"  
"Chilly Lusk, of course. The boy's been in love with her since they were in bibs. And he comes as near being fit for her as anybody."  
"Hump!" said the other sardonically. "No man I ever saw was half good enough for a good woman. But good women marry just the same. It isn't Lusk I used to think it would be, but I've got a pair of eyes in my head, if you haven't. It's young Vallant."  
The pearl fan twisted in Katherine's fingers. What she had guessed was an open secret, then!  
The major made an exclamation that had the effect of coming after a jaw-dropped silence. "I never thought of that!"  
The other resumed slowly, somewhat bitterly, it seemed to the girl listening. "If her mother was in love with Sassoon—"  
Katherine's heart beat fast and then stood still. Sassoon! That was the name of the man Vallant's father had killed in that old duel of which Judge Chalmers had told! "If her mother—" Shirley Dandridge's mother—"was in love with Sassoon?" Why—"Was she?"  
The major's query held a sharpness that seemed almost appeal. She was conscious that the other had faced about abruptly.  
"I've always believed so, certainly. If she had loved Vallant, would she have thrown him over merely because he broke his promise not to be a party to a quarrel?"  
"You think not?" said the major huskily.  
"Not under the circumstances. Vallant was forced into it. No gentleman, at that day, could have declined the

him. Every sound of his voice, every slight of his face, will be a separate stab! Oh, his mere presence will be enough for Judith to bear. But with her heart in the grave with Sassoon, what would love between Shirley and young Vallant mean to her? Think of it!"  
He broke off, and there was a blank of silence, in which he turned with almost a sigh. Then Katharine saw him reach the bench with a single stride and drop his hand on the bowed shoulder.  
"Bristow!" he said brusquely. "You're ill! This confounded philandering at your time of life—"  
The major's face looked ashy pale, but he got up with a laugh. "Not I," he said; "I was never better in my life! We've had our mouthful of air. Come on back to the house."  
"Not much!" grunted the other. "I'm going where we both ought to have been hours ago." He threw away his cigar and stalked down the path into the darkness.  
The major stood looking after him till he had disappeared, then suddenly dropped on the bench and covered his face. Something like a groan burst from him.  
"My God!" he said, and his voice came to Katharine with a quaver of age and suffering—very different from the jovial accents of the ballroom—"If I were only sure it was Sassoon!"  
Presently he rose, and went slowly toward the lighted doorway.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

The Ambush.  
Not long after, from the musicians' bower the sound of "Home, Sweet Home," drifted over the poignant rose-scent, and presently the driveway resounded to rolling wheels and the voices of negro drivers, and the house-entrance jostled with groups, muffled in loose carriage-wraps, silken cloaks and light overcoats, calling tired but laughing farewells.  
Katharine, on the step, round herself looking into Vallant's eyes. "How can I tell you how much I have enjoyed it all?" she said. "I've stayed till the very last minute—which is something for one's fourth season! And now, goodbye, for we are off tomorrow for Hot Springs."  
Her father had long ago betaken himself homeward, and the big three-seated surrey—holding "six comfortable and nine fumillah," in the phrase of Lige the coachman—had returned for the rest: Judge Chalmers, the two younger girls and Shirley. Katharine greeted the latter with a charming smile. What more natural than that she should find herself straightaway on the rear seat with royalty? The two girls safely disposed in the middle, the judge climbed up beside the driver, who cracked his whip and they were off.  
The way was not long, and Katharine had need of dispatch if that revengeful fate were to be used which fate had put into her hands. She wasted little time.  
"It seems so strange," she said, "to find our host in such surroundings! I can scarcely believe him the same John Vallant I've danced with a hundred times in New York. He's been here such a short while and yet he couldn't possibly be more at home if he'd lived in Virginia always. And you all treat him as if he were quite one of yourselves."  
Shirley smiled enchantingly. "Why, yes," she said, "maybe it seems odd to outsiders. But you see, with us a Vallant is always a Vallant. No matter where he has lived, he's the son of his father and the master of Damory court."  
"That's the wonderful part of it. It's so—so English, somehow."  
"Is it?" said Shirley. "I never thought of it. But perhaps it seems so. We have the old houses and the old names and think of them, no doubt, in the same way."  
"What a sad life his father had!" pursued Katharine dreamily. "You know all about the duel, of course?"  
Shirley shrank imperceptibly now. The subject touched Vallant so closely it seemed almost as if it belonged to him and to her alone—not a thing to be flippantly touched on. "Yes," she said somewhat slowly, "every one here knows of it."  
"No doubt it has been almost forgotten," the other continued, "but John's coming must naturally have revamped the old story. What was it about—the quarrel? A love-affair?"  
"It's so long ago," murmured Shirley. "I suppose some one could tell if they would."  
"Major Bristow, perhaps," conjectured Katharine thoughtfully.  
"He was one of the seconds," admitted Shirley unhappily. "But by common consent that side of it wasn't talked of at the time. Men in Virginia have old-fashioned ideas about women."  
"Ah, it's fine of them!" panted Katharine. "I can imagine the men who knew about that dreadful affair, in their southern chivalry, drawing a cordon of silence about the name of that girl with her broken heart. For if she loved one of the two, it must have been Sassoon—not Vallant; else he would have stayed. How terrible to see one's lover killed in such a way

It was quickly ended for him, but the poor woman was left to bear it all the years. I fancy she would never wholly get over it, never be able to forget him, though she tried."  
Shirley made some reply that was lost in the whirring wheels. The other's words seemed almost an echo of what she herself had been thinking.  
"Maybe she married after a while, too. A woman must make a life for herself, you know. If she lives here, it will be sad for her, this opening of the old wound by John's coming. . . . And looking so like his father—"  
Katharine paused. There was a kind of exhilaration in this subtle baiting. Shirley stirred uneasily, and in the glimpsing light her face looked troubled. Katharine's voice had touched paths, and in spite of her distaste of the subject, Shirley had been entering into the feeling of that supposititious woman.  
The judge, on the front seat, was telling a low-toned story over his



The Year Was That of the Duel: the Date Was the Day Following the Jessamine Anniversary.

shoulder for the detection of Nancy and Betty, but Shirley was not listening. Her whole mind was full of what Katharine had been saying. She was picturing to herself this woman, her secret hidden all these years, hearing of John Vallant's coming to Damory court, learning of this likeness, shrinking from sight of it, dreading the painful memory it must thrust upon her.  
"Suppose"—Katharine's voice was dreamy—"that she and John met suddenly, without warning. What would she do? Would she say anything? Perhaps she would faint."  
Shirley started violently. Her hands, as they drew her cloak uncertainly about her, began to tremble, as if with cold. Something fell from them to the bottom of the surrey.  
Through her chiffon veil Katharine noted this with a slow smile. It had been easier than she had thought. She said no more, and the carriage rolled on, to the accompaniment of giggles over the judge's peroration. As it neared the Rosewood lane she leaned toward Shirley.  
"You have dropped your fan," said she—and your gloves, too. . . . I might have reached them for you. Why, we are there already. How short the drive has seemed!"  
"Don't drive up the lane, Lige," said Shirley, and her voice seemed sharp and strange even to herself. "The wheels would wake mother." Katharine bade her goodbye with careful sweetness, as the judge bundled her down in his strong friendly arms. "No," she told him, "don't come with me. It's not a bit necessary. Emmaline will be waiting for me."  
He climbed into her vacant place as the girls called their good nights. "Well all sleep late enough in the morning, I reckon," he said with a laugh, "but it's been a great success!"  
Emmaline was crouched in a chair in the hall, a rug thrown over her knees, in open-mouthed slumber. She started up at the touch of Shirley's hand, yawning widely.  
"I 'clare to goodness," she muttered, "I was jes' fixin' 't go 't' sleep!"  
"I'm so tired, Emmaline. Take the crown. It's heavy."  
The negro woman untangled the glittering points from the meshing hair with careful fingers. "Po' li' chicky-dee-dee!" she said lovingly. "Reck'n she flop all 't' feddahs outer her wings. Gimme that o' tin crown—I like ter lam' it out 't' winder! Come on, now; we go upstairs soft so's not ter sturb Mis' Judith."  
In the silvery-blue bedroom, she deftly unfastened the hooks of the heavy katin gown and coaxed her mistress to lie on the sofa while she unpinned the masses of waving hair till they lay in a rich surge over the cushion. Then she brought a brush and crouching down beside her, began with long gentle strokes to smooth out the silken threads, talking to her the while in a soft crooning monotone.  
Under these ministrations Shirley lay languid and speechless, her eyes closed. The fear that had stricken her heart by turns seemed a cold hand pressing upon its beating and an alid vapor rising stealthily over it. But

her hands were hot and her eyelids burned. Finally she roused herself.  
"Thank you, Emmaline," she said in a tired voice, "good night now; I'm going to sleep, and you must go to bed, too."

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Awakening.  
The sun had passed the meridian next day when Vallant awoke, from a sleep as deep as Abou ben Adhem's, yet one crowded with flying tiptoe dreams. The one great fact of Shirley's love had lain at the core of all these honied images, and his mind was full of it as his eyes opened, wide all at once, to the new day.  
He looked at his watch and rolled from the bed with a laugh. "Past twelve!" he exclaimed. "Good heavens! What about all the work I had laid out for today?"  
Presently he was rushing in the lake, shooting under his curved hand unerring jets of water at Chum, who danced about the rim barking, now venturing to wet a valorous paw, now scrambling up the bank to escape the watery javelins.  
Vallant came up the terraces with his blood bounding to a new rapture. Crossing the garden, he ran quickly to the little close which held the sundial and pulled a single great passion-flower. He stood a moment holding it to his face, his nostrils catching its faint elusive perfume. Only last night, under the moon, he had stood there with Shirley in his arms. A gust of the unbelievable sweetness of that moment poured over him. His face softened.  
Standing with his sandaled feet deep in the white blossoms, the sun on his damp hair and the loose robe clinging to his moist limbs, he gave himself to a sudden day-dream. A wonderful waking dream of joy overflowing years of ambitious ease; of the Damory Court that should be in days to come.

It showed a strange assemblage! A row of chests, stored with winter clothing, gave forth a clean pungent smell of cedar, and at one side stood an antique spinet and a worn set of horsehair furniture.  
Shirley had turned her miserable eyes on a book-shelf along one wall. The volumes it contained had been her father's, and among them stood a row of tomes taller than their fellows—the bound numbers of a county newspaper, beginning before the war. The back of each was stamped with the year. She was deciphering these faded imprints. "Thirty years ago," she whispered; "yes, here it is."  
She set down the candle and dragged out one of the huge leather-backs. Staggering under the weight, she rested its edge on the table and began feverishly to turn the pages, her eye on the date line. She stopped presently with a quick breath—she had reached May 15th. The year was that of the duel: the date was the day following the Jessamine anniversary. Fearfully her eye overran the columns.  
Then suddenly she put her open hand on the page as though to blot out the words, every trace of color stricken from cheek and brow. But the line seemed to glow up through the very flesh: "Died, May 14th; Edward Sassoon, in his twenty-sixth year."

The book slipped to the floor with a crash that echoed through the room. It was true, then! It was Sassoon's death that her mother mourned. The man in whose arms she had stood such a little while ago by the old dial of Damory Court was the son of the man who had killed him!  
"Oh, God," she whispered, "just when I was so happy! Oh, mother, mother! You loved him, and your heart broke when he died. It was Vallant who broke it—Vallant—Vallant. His father!"  
She slipped down upon the bare floor and crouched there shuddering and agonized, her disheveled hair wet with tears. Was her love to be but the thing of an hour, a single clasp—and then, forever, nothing? His father's deed was not his fault. Yet how could she love a man whose every feature brought a pang to that mother she loved more than herself? So, over and over, the wheel of her thought turned in the same desolate groove, and over and over the paroxysms of grief and longing submerged her.  
Notelessly as she had descended, she crept again up the stair. As she

passed her mother's door, she paused a moment, and laying her arms out across it, pressed her lips to the dark grain of the wood.

When he came from the little close there was a new mystery in the sunshine, a fresh and joyous meaning in the intense blue overarching of the imponderable sky. Every bird-note held its own love-secret. A wood thrush sang it from a silver birch beside the summer-house, and a bob-white whistled it in the little valley beyond. Even the long trip-hammer of a far-away woodpecker beat a radiant tattoo.  
He paused to greet the flaming peacock that sent out a curdling screech, in which the tentative potterack! potterack! of a guinea-fowl tangled itself softly. "Go on," he invited. "Explode all you want to, old Fire-Cracker. Hang your purple-and-gold pessimism! You only make the birds sound sweeter. Perhaps that's what you're for—who knows?"  
He tried to work, but work was not for that marvelous afternoon. He wandered about the gardens, planning this or that addition: a little longer sweep to the pansy-bed—a clump of bull-rushes at the farther end of the lake. He peered into the stable: a saddle horse stood there now, but there should be more steeds stamping in those stalls one day, good horses, flesh bought with sound walnut timber from the hillside. How he and Shirley would go galloping over those gleaming roads, in that rosy future when she belonged to him!

Uncle Jefferson, from the door of the kitchens, watched him swinging about in the sunshine, whistling the "Indian Serenade."  
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

To Remove Spots From Varnish.  
One of the best substances to use in removing spots from varnished surfaces is butter. The stronger the better.



### STILL GROW ANCIENT GRAIN

Staff of Life Made Use of by Cave Dwellers is Cultivated Today in Switzerland.  
How old is bread? Disgruntled boarders may have theories upon the age of the particular bread served to them, but that is beside the question. So long as records of civilized man go back bread has been the staff of life. It is somewhere in the history of prehistoric man that man first learned to grind his grain, make dough and bake it on hot stones.  
In the time of neolithic man, when one branch of humanity for defense drove piles in the edges of Swiss lakes and built huts on their tops, bread was made. That much at least is certain. These stone age progressives had learned to reap grain and probably to cultivate it in a rude way. They possessed wheat of several varieties, barley, rye and other kinds. Curiously enough, two of these prehistoric varieties are still cultivated in Switzerland not far from where the lake dwellers lived.  
These are the bic mottu, still grown in La Gruyere, and the nouette de

Lausanne. The first of these came from the Caucasus, but no one ventures to guess as to how the lake dwellers came to have it.  
Many mills have been found suited to make a coarse meal of the grain, and even fragments of the bread have been kept in the clay vessels that escaped fracture.  
It is due to the lake dwellers' custom of building their houses on piles that we know so much about them. The mud beneath their huts made an excellent trap to preserve things for the modern scientist.

English Greetings.  
Erasmus, coming to England in Henry VIII's time, was struck with the deep heartiness of our wishes—good, ay, and bad, too; but he most admired the good ones. Other nations ask in their greetings how a man carries himself, or how doth he stand with the world, or how doth he find himself; but the English greet with a pious wish that God may give one a good morning or a good evening, good day or "god'd'en," as the old writers have it; and when we part we wish that "God may be with you," though we now clip it into "good-by"—Friswell.

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Katharine's Heart Beat Fast and Then Stood Still. Sassoon!

meeting. He could have explained it to Judith's satisfaction—a woman doesn't need much evidence to justify the man she's in love with. He must have written her—he couldn't have gone away without that—and if she had loved him, she would have called him back.  
The major made no answer. Katharine saw a cigar fall unheeded upon the grass, where it lay glowing like a panther's eye.  
The other had risen now, his stooped figure bulking in the moonlight. His voice sounded harsh and strained: "I loved Beauty Vallant," he said, "and his son is his son to me—but I have to think of Judith, too. She faints, Bristow, when she saw him—Shirley told me about it. Her mother has made her think it was the scent of the roses! He's his father's living image, and he's brought the past back with