



CHAPTER VII.

It was hard to tell, save for a certain deliberateness of speech and a color a little more pronounced than that of a Spanish woman, that Mrs. Frank Armour had not been brought up in England. She had a kind of grave sweetness and distant charm which made her notable at any table or in any ballroom. Indeed it soon became apparent that she was to be the pleasant talk, the interest of the season. This was tolerably confirmed by the fact that, as she sat alone at Greyhops and read The Morning Post, noticing Lali's name at distinguished gatherings, or, picking up The World, saw how the lion hunters talked extravagantly of her, he took some satisfaction to himself that he had foreseen her triumph where others looked for her downfall. Lali herself was not elated. It gratified her, but she had been an angel, and a very unsatisfactory one, if it had not done so.

As her confidence grew (though outwardly she had never appeared to lack it greatly) she did not hesitate to speak of herself as an Indian, her country as a good country and her people as a noble if dispossessed race—the more so if she thought reference to her nationality and past was being rather conspicuously avoided. She had asked General Armour for an interview with her husband's solicitor. This was granted. When she met the solicitor, she asked him to send no newspaper to her husband containing any reference to herself, nor yet to mention her in his letters.

She had never directly received a line from him but once, and that was after she had come to know the truth about his marriage with her. She could read in the conventional sentences, made simple as for a child, the strained politeness and his absolute silence as to whether or not a child had been born to them, the utter absence of affection for her. She had also induced General Armour and his wife to give her husband's solicitor no information regarding the birth of the child. There was thus apparently no more inducement for him to hurry back to England than there was when he had sent her off on his mission of retaliation, which had been such an ignominious failure, for the humiliation of his family had been short lived, the affront to Lady Haldwell nothing at all. The Armours had not been human if they had failed to enjoy their daughter-in-law's success. Although they never perhaps would quite recover from the disappointment concerning Lady Agnes Martling, the result was so much better than they in their cheerfulness dared hope for that they appeared genuinely content.

To their grandchildren they were devotedly attached. Marion was his faithful slave and admirer, so much so that Captain Vidal, who now and then was permitted to see the child, declared himself jealous. He and Marion were to be married soon. The wedding had been delayed owing to his enforced absence abroad. Mrs. Edward Lambert, once Mrs. Townley, shyly regretted in Lali's presence that the child or one as sweet was not hers. Her husband evidently shared her opinion from the extraordinary notice he took of it when his wife was not present. Not that Richard Joseph Armour, Jr., was always an evidence, but when asked for by his faithful friends and admirers he was amiably produced.

Meanwhile Frank Armour across the sea was engaged with many things. His business concerns had not prospered prodigiously, chiefly because his judgment, as his temper, had grown somewhat uncertain. His popularity in the Hudson bay country had been at some tension since he had shipped his wife away to England. Even the ordinary savage mind saw something unusual and undomestic in it, and the general hospitality declined a little. Armour did not immediately guess the cause, but one day about a year after his wife had gone he found occasion to reproach a half breed, by name Jacques Pontiac, and Jacques, with more honesty than politeness, said some hard words and asked how much he paid for his English hired devil to kill his wife. Strange to say, he did not resent this startling remark. It set him to thinking. He began to blame himself for not having written often to his people—and to his wife. He wondered how far his revenge had succeeded. He was most ashamed of it now. He knew that he had done a dishonorable thing. The more he thought upon it the more angry with himself he became. Yet he dreaded to go back to England and face it all—the reproach of his people, the amusement of society, his wife herself. He never attempted to picture her as a civilized being. He scarcely knew her when he married her. She knew him much better, for primitive people are quicker in the play of their passions, and she had come to love him before he had begun to notice her at all.

Presently he ate his heart out with mortification. To be killed forever—a savage! It was horrible! Their children? It was strange he had not thought of that before. Children? He shrugged his shoulders. There might possibly be a child, but children—never! But he doubted even regarding a child, for no word had come to him concerning that possibility. He was even most puzzled at the tone and substance of their letters. From the beginning there had been no reproaches, no excitement, no railing, but studied kindness and conventional statements, through which Mrs. Armour's solicited affection scarcely ever peeped. He had shot his bolt and got—consideration, almost imperturbability. They appeared to treat the matter as though he were a wild youth who would yet mend his ways. He read over their infrequent letters to him; in to them there was still more infrequent. In one there was the statement that "she was progressing favorably with her English," in another that "she was riding a good deal."

again that "she appeared anxious to adapt herself to her new life."

At all these he whistled a little to himself and smiled bitterly. Then, all at once, he got up and straightway burned them all. He again tried to put the matter behind him for the present, knowing that he must face it one day, and staying off its reality as long as possible. He did his utmost to be philosophical and say his quiet retreat, but it was easier tried than done, for Jacques Pontiac's words kept ringing in his mind, and he found himself carrying round a vague load which made him abstracted, occasionally and often a little reckless in action and speech. In hunting bear and moose he had proved himself more daring than the oldest hunter and proportionately successful. He paid his servants well, but was sharp with them. He made long, hard expeditions, defying the weather as the hardest of prairie and mountain men mostly hesitate to defy it. He bought up much land, then, dissatisfied, sold it again at a loss, but subsequently made final arrangements for establishing a very large farm.

When he once became actually interested in this, he shook off something of his moodiness and settled himself to develop the thing. He had good talent for initiative and administration and at last, in the time when his wife was a feature of the London season, he found his scheme in working order, and the necessity of going to England was forced upon him.

Actually he wished that the absolute necessity had presented itself before. There was always the moral necessity, of course—but then! Here now was a business need, and he must go. Yet he did not fix a day or make definite arrangements. He could hardly have believed himself such a coward. With Liberalism he called himself with a sneer, and one day at Fort Charles sat down to write to his solicitor in Montreal to say that he would come on at once. Still he hesitated. As he sat there thinking Eye-of-the-Moon, his father-in-law, opened the door quietly and entered. He had avoided the chief ever since he had come back to Fort Charles and practically had not spoken to him for a year. Armour flushed slightly with annoyance. But presently, with a touch of his old humor, he rose, held out his hand and said ironically: "Well, father-in-law, it's about time we had a big talk, isn't it? We are not very intimate for such close relatives."

The old Indian did not fully understand the meaning or the tone of Armour's speech, but he said, "How!" and reaching out his hand for the pipe offered him lighted it and sat down, smoking in silence. Armour waited, but seeing that the other was not yet moved to talk, he turned to his letter again. After a time Eye-of-the-Moon said gravely, getting to his feet, "Brother!"

Armour looked up; then rose also. The Indian bowed to him contentiously; then sat down again. Armour threw a leg over the corner of the table and waited. "Brother," said the Indian presently, "you are of the great race that conquers us. You come and take our land and our game, and we have to beg of you for food and shelter. Then you take our daughters, and we know not where they go. They are gone, like the down from the thistle. We see them not, but you remain. And men say evil things. There are bad words abroad. Brother, what have you done with my daughter?"

Had the Indian come and stormed, begged money of him, sponged on him or abused him, he had taken it very calmly. He, in fact, had been superior. But there was dignity in the chief's manner; there was solemnity in his speech; his voice conveyed resoluteness and earnestness, which the stoic calm of his face might not have suggested, and Armour felt that he had no advantage at all. Beside, Armour had a conscience, though he had played some rare tricks with it of late, and it needed more hardihood than he possessed to face this old man down. And why face him down? Lali was his daughter, blood of his blood, the chief's daughter of one branch of his people, honored at least among these poor savages, and the old man had a right to ask, as asked another more famous, "Where is my daughter?"

His hands in his pockets, Armour sat silent for a minute, eyeing his boot as he swung his leg to and fro. Presently he said: "Eye-of-the-Moon, I don't think I can talk as poetically as you, even in my own language, and I shall not try, but I would like to ask you this, Do you believe any harm has come to your daughter—to my wife?"

The old Indian forgot to blow the tobacco smoke from his mouth, and as he sat debating, lips slightly apart, it came looking out in little trailing clouds and gave a strange appearance to his iron featured face. He looked steadily at Armour and said: "You are of those who rule in your land"—here Armour protested—"you have much gold to buy and sell. I am a chief"—he drew himself up—"I am poor. We speak with the straight tongue. It is cowardly who lie. Speak deep, as from the heart, my brother, and tell me where my daughter is."

Armour could not but respect the chief for the way this request was put, but still it galled him to think that he was under suspicion of having done any bodily injury to his wife, so he quietly persisted, "Do you think I have done Lali any harm?"

"The thing is strange," replied the other. "You are of those who are great among your people. You married a daughter of a red man. Then she was yours for as long as one moon, and you sent her far away, and you said, 'Do me as a dog in your sight. Do men whose hearts are dead as dogs? They have said strange things of you. I have that I may say to the tale bearers. 'You

Armour sat for a moment longer, his face turned to the open window. He was perfectly still, but he had become



"Brother, what have you done with my daughter?"

grave. He was about to reply to the chief when the trader entered the room hurriedly with a newspaper in his hand. He paused abruptly when he saw Eye-of-the-Moon. Armour felt that the trader had something important to communicate. He pressed it was in the paper. He merely held out his hand for it. The trader handed it to him hesitatingly, at the same time pointing to a paragraph and saying: "It is nearly two years old, as you see. I chanced upon it by accident today."

It was a copy of a London evening paper containing a somewhat sensational account of Lali's accident. It said that she was in a critical condition. This time Armour did not ask for brandy, but the trader put it out beside him. He shook his head. "Gordon," he said presently, "I shall leave here in the morning. Please send my men to me."

The trader whispered to him: "She was all right, of course, long ago, Mr. Armour, or you would have heard." Armour looked at the date of the paper. He had several letters from England of a later date, and these said nothing of her illness. It bewildered him; made him uneasy. Perhaps the first real sense of his duty as a husband came home to him there. For the first time he was anxious about the woman for her own sake. The trader had been the room.

"What a scandal I've been!" said Armour between his teeth, oblivious for the moment of Eye-of-the-Moon's presence. Presently, bethinking himself, he turned to the Indian. "I've been debating," he said. "Eye-of-the-Moon, my wife is in England, at my father's home. I am going to her. Men have lied in thinking I would do her any injury, but, but—never mind, the harm was of another kind. It isn't wise for a white man and an Indian to marry, but when they are married—well, they must live as man and wife should live, and, as I said, I am going to my wife—my daughter."

To say all this to a common Indian whose only property was a half dozen ponies and a couple of tepees required something very like moral courage, but, then, Armour had not been exercising moral courage during the last year or so, and its exercise was profitable to him. The next morning he was on his way to Montreal, and Eye-of-the-Moon was the richest chief in British North America at that moment by \$5,000 or so.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Waiter in a Fog. "The practice of smoking is so prevalent in Holland," once remarked a traveler, "that when you are in an alchovose where everybody smokes you cannot possibly recognize the person sitting next to you." "Then how does the waiter manage to distinguish the customers?" "Oh, easily enough. He always carries a pair of bellows about with him to blow away the smoke which he discovers the person who summoned him."—Rire de l'Univers.

A Gentle Hint. X. was not overcautious about his personal appearance. One day in the case of a celebrated painter he was fumbling in his pockets.

"What are you looking for?" inquired the witty artist.

"A pencil. I only wanted to jot down a word or two on my shirt cuff."

"See, here is a bit of chalk," was the amiable rejoinder.—Supplement Illustr.

A Successful Test. At a small town in Kent a gentleman employed a carpenter to put up a partition, and had it filled with sawdust to deaden the sound. When it was completed the gentleman called from one side to the carpenter on the other.

"Smith, can you hear me?"

"London Tit-Bits."

About 400 B. C. the Indians first introduced the present system of writing from left to right; previously to that date from right to left prevailed.

There is a saltwater cave in Burton county, Ga., that is overrun by millions of bats, and has been so ever since the first settlement of the country.

Any part of the body which is supposed to be especially susceptible to cold or "delicate" is too often the point selected for an extra thickness of clothing.

In 1888, at the siege of Herat by the Persians, Mahmoud Shah had a heavy bronze gun cast in his camp, and when the siege was raised the gun was saved to pieces and taken back to Tehran.

The longest canal in the world is claimed to be the one which extends from the frontier of China to St. Petersburg. It measures in all 4,729 miles.

Breechloading guns were invented by Thornton & Hall, 1811. Breechloading cannon were used by the Turks in 1553.

CURES OTHERS

Rad Cough, Spasmodic, Consumption, K. C. McLean, Esq., of Kew-Forest, Princess Anne Co., Va., writes: "When I commenced taking your 'Discovery' I was very low with a cough, and at times spit up much blood. I was not able to do the least work, but now of the time was a bed. I was all run-down, very weak, my heart was dizzy, and I was extremely dependent. The first time I took it I felt better, and I had taken five bottles, and now I do not look like the same man I was one year ago. People are astonished, and say, 'Well, just year this time I would not have thought that you would be living now.' I can truthfully say I am entirely cured of a disease which, but for your wonderful 'Discovery,' would have resulted in my death."



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