

Settled Out of Court.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER.

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CHAPTER V. "Is it possible that you do not know that you do not love me, Angela? That my most ardent desire is to tell you my wife? I have longed to tell you so a dozen times, but I was afraid of speaking too soon!"

"He paused abruptly and stood looking at her anxiously. Angela had turned very white, and did not speak for a moment."

"I am greatly surprised," she said, at last, meeting his gaze with grave, steady eyes. "I did think you liked me, and was pleased, for I like you; but that you would make up your mind to venture on marrying a girl you know so little—it is little more than a month since we met—a girl not even in your own rank of life—seems incredible! It is the wildest imprudence!"

"That is your fault!" exclaimed Forrester, bluntly. "It may be imprudent or what you like, but I am ready to run all risks, for I know you are the only woman I ever met who seemed to be indispensable to my happiness! Don't tell me you cannot care for me, or that you love any other fellow. Speak to me, and let me know how I stand!"

"I do not love anyone in the way you mean! Not even you—the color rose slowly and softly in her cheeks—but I think you are kind and true. Still I dare not promise to marry you all at once! You must take time to think and so must I. You must go away and consult your friends!"

"Oh, don't you know, I believe it will all come right, my good-by, did I say, I will let you know my movements from time to time." "Yes, do, and I'll keep you informed of the state of affairs here." They shook hands, and Forrester went on his way—if not rejoicing, at least not seriously disturbed.

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"Yes, read bad news. I am sorry to say," returned Dixon, gravely. "Out with it, then," said Forrester, laying aside his hat and drawing a chair opposite his friend.

fore his client. It appeared that Miss Selwyn's right to the fortune depended on her father's and mother's marriage in an obscure village church, as well as her own birth, a couple of years later, in a German town, were in her solicitor's hands.

George Selwyn, a man of weak character, had been overwhelmed with grief when he learned that his wife, who was the birth of their daughter, and gladly accepted the offer to adopt her made by the child's maternal aunt, who was housekeeper in a noble family, and well off for her station. From these forward he seemed to forget that he was a father, and his wife, not without believing in the legality of his marriage, and too glad to keep the motherless little girl as her own, lost sight of Selwyn until, about a year before his death, she received a packet addressed her in his handwriting and accompanied by a letter from his solicitor, in which the packet should not be opened until the little Sarah was nineteen, or his brother John was dead. He had always cherished the hope of reconciliation with his wealthy, powerful brother, who would never have forgiven him a low marriage. But death took him from among his hopes and schemes.

The news of John Selwyn's death did not reach his niece till a considerable time after the event. Then her aunt opened the packet and found the papers now in her solicitor's hands, nor did the fact that his intestacy transformed her adopted daughter into an heiress occur to her till suggested by a friend of her husband who also recommended her to a solicitor.

(To be concluded.)

CHAPTER XI. "I'm not! Even if I am robbed of my inheritance, my kinsman can well afford a couple of thousand."

"That's rather an unprincipled speech, Forrester. I am afraid it will be some time before you are put out of suspense, for there is a heap of business just now in the probate court."

"It is all an infernal nuisance," cried Forrester, impatiently. "Very natural you should think so, but 'time and the hour run through the darkest day.' It is well you took my advice and postponed sending in your papers."

"Oh, don't you know, I believe it will all come right, my good-by, did I say, I will let you know my movements from time to time." "Yes, do, and I'll keep you informed of the state of affairs here." They shook hands, and Forrester went on his way—if not rejoicing, at least not seriously disturbed.

"The succeeding weeks left an impression of restless discontent on the gallant lance's memory. He wandered about to find, finding one place more intolerable than another. He tried his hand at fishing, and vowed old Johnson was right when he described it as a rod with a fly at one end and a fool at the other. He visited various shooting boxes advertised for sale, and arranged

for his. "Do not come to see me for—oh! for some time. Go away among your own kind of people. See other women. Make sure that you really need me, and I will think of you. I do not want to love you. I dread being unhappy. It would annihilate me."

"And when may I return?" asked Forrester, kissing the hand he held, thrilled by her admission that she feared to love him. "Oh! I cannot say. A fortnight; three weeks. How long do you think?" "Twenty-four hours," he replied laughing. "No! I accept the test. I will go out of town for a fortnight. At the end of my banishment I will come up to hear my sentence. Keep me in your mind, I beseech you, and think favorably of all I have said, I wish you could read my heart."