

WOMEN'S INTERESTS

A GIRL AND A MAN

A New and Vital Romance of City Life
by Virginia Terhune Van der Water

CHAPTER XLVII.
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Agnes drew a long breath of relief as she went home at the end of an hour and a half in Mr. Bainbridge's apartment. Nobody could have been kinder or more considerate than this man had been. When at half-past nine she had told him that she must not stay any later this evening, he had made no demur.

"I always have something cold to drink in the icebox," he had said. "Won't you have a glass of demerol—or something of that sort?"

"Oh, no; thank you," she had replied. "I am not thirsty."

"When can you come again?" he asked. "You know I want to get ahead with this work as rapidly as possible."

Four evenings during that first week found her in Hasbrook Bainbridge's library. The copying did not progress fast, for it was tedious and difficult to decipher some of the quaint characters. Often the man and girl would puzzle for some minutes over a single sentence.

The discussions thus aroused made the pair feel better acquainted than they had been before. Yet when they met at the office, Bainbridge's manner was what it had always been in public—gravelly polite.

It was when she had been doing evening work for over two weeks that Agnes, returning home about 10 o'clock one night, was met at the door of her apartment by Miss Watson.

"Oh, I am so glad you have come!" the nurse exclaimed. "Your aunt is worse, and I want you to telephone for the doctor—quickly, please."

After Agnes had run out to the drugstore and summoned Dr. Martin, she asked Miss Watson a tremulous question.

"Did you have to wait long for me—I mean, could I have done anything for auntie had I come earlier?"

"Nothing," the nurse assured her. "This attack came on just before you got in."

SHE HAS A BITE TO EAT

Anxious as she was, Agnes felt comforted at this bit of information. This evening, for the first time, she had lingered for a few minutes after she had stopped her copying to eat a sandwich and drink a glass of stinger ale in Mr. Bainbridge's luxuriously-appointed dining-room. Her companion had taken a high ball.

The cool evenings of early September were here now; she had walked rapidly to her destination after an unusually light dinner, and the exercise had made her hungry. She had enjoyed the brief period of relaxation and the frugal repast, but the memory of it troubled her conscience, lest her aunt had suffered longer than was necessary because of the niece's self-indulgence. Hence her sensation of relief at the nurse's reply.

But graver fears were awakened when Dr. Martin arrived. He had hoped that all was going well with the patient, but now a consultation could be deferred no longer, he declared. A specialist was communicated with and made an appointment to meet Dr. Martin the following forenoon.

Thus it happened that early the next morning Mr. Hale received a telephone message from his stenographer, asking permission to stay away until noon—explaining that her aunt was worse and that a consultation was to be held at once.

"I do not see how I can spare you," Mr. Hale objected. "I would suggest that you come down as usual, and return at the noon-hour to ascertain how your relative is."

"Very well," Agnes answered.

But her heart was hot within her as she hurried downtown. She was late, for she had taken for granted her employer's consent to her absence. He was out when she entered the office, and Mr. Bainbridge was at Mr. Hale's desk.

"Hale will be back in a little while," Bainbridge explained. "He was called out unexpectedly, so I offered to go over some of his mail and answer such letters as I can during his absence. This happens to be my easy day."

"I see," she said, closing the door and seating herself at her machine.

He dictated several letters, then rising, crossed the room and stood by her chair.

HE CALLS HER "AGNES"

"Agnes!" he said. He had never before called her by her first name and she looked up in surprise. The expression in his eyes that she had seen once before—the expression that made her feel as if she were being hypnotized—held her now.

"What?" she breathed.

"Hale has told me of your new trouble," the man went on. "So there is to be a consultation with a specialist—and more money to be paid out! Poor, little girl."

"Don't," she exclaimed, putting her hand to her throat as if to check the contraction that came at the sound of his compassionate words. "Don't pity me! I can't stand it just now."

"I know! I know!" he soothed. "And Hale was a brute to drag you down here when you were so anxious. And I can do so little! Yet, dear— I can help you by my friendship, my affection. Let me be something more than your employer. Let me tell you how much I care for you!"

He bent over her, and his hot breath was against her face, while his heavy hand rested on her shoulder. At the personal contact she sprang from him.

"No—no!" she exclaimed. "You are my employer, and that only. Oh, I don't know what you are talking about. Please—"

The door opened and Bainbridge, turning, faced Mr. Hale as he entered. The change in his voice made the girl catch her breath.

"Ah, Hale," said the junior member of the firm. "I am glad you've come. Poor Miss Morley is quite upset about her aunt. I was just telling her that she is foolish to be so anxious, and that the best thing for her to do is to forget her worry in her work. Now that you are here, I will leave her to you."

And before Agnes could realize what had happened, Bainbridge had gone out of the office, and she was alone with her employer.

(To Be Continued.)

Love Insurance



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(Continued From Yesterday.)

"I am delighted to meet your lordship," said he to Harrowby. "Knew your father, the earl, very well at one time. Had business dealings with him—often. A man after my own heart. Always ready to take a risk. I trust you left him well?"

"Quite, thank you," Lord Harrowby answered. "Although he will insist on playing polo. At his age, eighty-two, it is a dangerous sport."

Mr. Jephson smiled.

"Still taking chances," he said. "A splendid old gentleman. I understand that you, Lord Harrowby, have a proposition to make to me as an underwriter."

They sat down. Alas, if Mr. Burke, who compiled the well known "Peerage," could have seen Lord Harrowby then what distress would have been his! For a most unlordly flush again mantled that British cheek. A nobleman was supremely rattled.

"I will try to explain," said his lordship, gulping a plebeian gulp. "My affairs have been for some time in rather a chaotic state. Idleness—the life of the town—you gentlemen will understand. Naturally it has been suggested to me that I exchange my name and title for the millions of some American hells. I have always violently objected to any such plan. I—I couldn't quite bring myself to do any such low trick as that. And then—a few months ago on the continent—I met a girl—"

He paused.

"I'm not a clever chap, really," he went on. "I'm afraid I cannot describe her to you. Spirited—charming— He looked toward the youngest of the trio. "You at least understand," he finished.

Mr. Minot leaned back in his chair and smiled a most engaging smile.

"Perfectly," he said.

"Thank you," went on Lord Harrowby in all seriousness. "It was only incidental, quite irrelevant, that this young woman happened to be very wealthy. I fell desperately in love. I am still in that—pleasing state. The young lady's name, gentlemen, is Cynthia Meyrick. She is the daughter of Spencer Meyrick, whose fortune has, I believe, been accumulated in oil."

Mr. Thacker's eyebrows rose respectfully.

"A week from next Tuesday," said Lord Harrowby solemnly, "at San Marco, on the east coast of Florida, this young woman and I are to be married."

"And what," asked Owen Jephson, "is your proposition?"

Lord Harrowby shifted nervously in his chair.

"I say we are to be married," he continued. "But are we? That is the nightmare that haunts me. A slip. My—creditors coming down on me. And, far more important, the dreadful agony of losing the dearest woman in the world."

"What could happen?" Mr. Jephson wanted to know.

"Did I say the young woman was vivacious?" inquired Lord Harrowby. "She is—a thousand girls in one. Some untoward happening and she might change her mind in a flash."

Silence within the room; outside the roar of New York and the clatter of the inevitable riveting machine making its points relentlessly.

"That," said Lord Harrowby slowly, "is what I wish you to insure me against, Mr. Jephson."

"You mean—"

"I mean the awful possibility of Miss Cynthia Meyrick's changing her mind."

Again silence, save for the riveting machine outside, and three men looking unbelievably at one another.

"Of course," his lordship went on hastily, "it is understood that I personally am very eager for this wedding to take place. It is understood that in the interval before the ceremony I shall

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"Well, say £100,000," suggested his lordship.

do all in my power to keep Miss Meyrick to her present intention. Should the marriage be abandoned because of any act of mine I would be ready to forfeit all claims on Boyd's."

[To be continued.]



Mr. Thacker recovered his breath and his voice at one and the same time.

"Preposterous!" he snorted. "Begging your lordship's pardon, you cannot expect hard headed business men to listen seriously to any such proposition as that. Tushery, sir, tushery! Speaking as the American representative of Boyd's—"

"One moment," interrupted Mr. Jephson. "In his eyes shone a queer light—a light such as one might expect to find in the eyes of Peter Pan, the boy who never grew up. 'One moment, please. What sum had you in mind, Lord Harrowby?'"

"Well, say £100,000," suggested his lordship. "I realize that my proposition is fantastic. I really admitted as much. But—"

"One hundred thousand pounds," Mr. Jephson repeated it thoughtfully. "I should have to charge your lordship a rather high rate. As high as 10 per cent."

Lord Harrowby seemed to be in the throes of mental arithmetic.

"I am afraid," he said finally, "I could not afford one hundred thousand at that rate. But I could afford—seventy-five thousand. Would that be satisfactory, Mr. Jephson?"

"Jephson!" cried Mr. Thacker wildly. "Are you mad? Do you realize—"

"I realize everything, Thacker," said Jephson calmly. "I have your lordship's word that the young lady is at present determined on this alliance? And that you will do all in your power to keep her to her intention?"

"You have my word," said Lord Harrowby. "If you should care to telegraph—"

"Your word is sufficient," said Jephson. "Mr. Minot, will you be kind enough to bring me a policy blank?"

"See here, Jephson," foamed Thacker. "What if this thing should get into the newspapers? We'd be the laughing-stock of the business world."

"It mustn't," said Jephson coolly.

"It might!" roared Thacker.

Mr. Minot arrived with a blank policy, and Mr. Jephson sat down at the young man's desk.

For a time there was no sound in the room save the scratching of two pens, while Mr. Thacker gazed openly mouthed at Mr. Minot and Mr. Minot light heartedly smiled back. Then Mr. Jephson reached for a blotter.

"I shall attend to the London end of this when I reach there five days hence," he said. "Perhaps I can find another underwriter to share the risk with me."

As the door closed upon the nobleman Mr. Thacker turned explosively on his friend from overseas.

"Jephson," he thundered, "you're an idiot! A rank uncoligated idiot!"

The Peter Pan light was bright in Jephson's eyes.

"So new," he half whispered. "So original! Bless the boy's heart. I've been waiting forty years for a proposition like that."

"Do you realize," Thacker cried, "that £75,000 of your good money depends on the honor of Lord Harrowby?"

"I do," returned Jephson. "And I would not be concerned if it were ten times that sum. I know the breed. Why, once—and you, Thacker, would have called me an idiot on that occasion, too—I insured his father against the loss of a polo game by a team on which the earl was playing. And he played like the devil—the earl did—won the game himself. Ah, I know the breed."

"Oh, well," sighed Thacker, "I won't argue. But one thing is certain, Jephson. You can't go back to England now. Your place is in San Marco with one hand on the rope that rings the wedding bells."

Jephson shook his great bald head.

"No," he said. "I must return today. It is absolutely necessary. My interests in San Marco are in the hands of Providence."

Mr. Thacker walked the floor wildly.

"Providence needs help in handling a woman," he protested. "Miss Meyrick must not change her mind. Some one must see that she doesn't. If you can't go yourself!" He paused, reflecting. "Some young man, active, capable—"

Mr. Richard Minot had risen from his chair and was moving softly toward his overcoat. Looking over his shoulder, he beheld Mr. Thacker's keen eyes upon him.

"Just going out to lunch," he said guiltily.

"Sit down, Richard," remarked Mr. Thacker, with decision.

Mr. Minot sat, the dread of something impending in his heart.

Mr. Thacker wheeled dramatically and faced his young assistant.

"Richard," he ordered, "go to San Marco. Go to San Marco and see to it that Miss Cynthia Meyrick does not change her mind."

A gone feeling shot through Mr. Minot in the vicinity of his stomach. It was possible that he really needed that lunch.

"Yes, sir," he said faintly. "Of course it's up to me to do anything you say. If you insist I'll go, but—"

"But what, Richard?"

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FUNERAL OF C. O. KIRACOPE
Mechanicsburg, Pa., Nov. 14.—Funeral services will be held here tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock for Clifford O. Kiracope, aged 39 years, who died at his home in Harrisburg, after several days' illness of pneumonia, in the First United Brethren Church, the Rev. E. C. B. Castle, officiating, assisted by the Rev. Dr. W. H. Washinger, of Chambersburg. Burial will be made in the Chestnut Hill Cemetery. Mr. Kiracope was a former resident of Mechanicsburg. He was station master for the Cumberland Valley railroad at Harrisburg. His wife and three children survive: George, Clifford, Jr., and John.

ANNIVERSARY OF CHURCH
Annville, Pa., Nov. 14.—On Sunday the United Brethren Church observed the fourth anniversary of the dedication of their edifice by a special arranged service. A. S. Kreider, chairman of the building committee addressed the congregation in the morning. In the evening the pastor, the Rev. B. F. Daugherty delivered an anniversary sermon.

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Amsterdam, via London, Nov. 14.—The Cologne Gazette says it cannot further doubt that the necessity more and more becomes apparent to mobilize the labor of the German people in the interest of the war. Coercion regarding male labor is certain, the newspaper adds, but female labor will be voluntary. The Lokai Anzeiger says that after the settlement of the question of labor the discussion of war aims will be permitted, with restrictions prohibiting party and class strife and attacks on neutrals.

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