

## NOT LIKE OTHER MEN

By Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey,  
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[Continued from last week.]

### CHAPTER X.

"YOU ARE A WOMAN—A WOMAN LIKE ME."

**T**HERE are times when tears are appropriate; there are moments when a gush of them will perform miracles which nothing else can do. Being in them selves the extreme of weakness, it is nevertheless certain that they often implant unexpected strength.

Erna Thomas had no intention of crying when she hastened to the bedside of Lisle Maxwell. There existed no logical reason why she should cry unless to shed a few sympathetic tears after the manner of women generally. There was every reason why she should not do so. She was not constituted after the manner of women generally in any sense of the word, for she was a typical western girl, who, bereft of her mother in her infancy, had relied upon her father and his household with a rod of iron ever since her birth. But she was superlatively feminine in all things, delectably feminine in most of them, strikingly so in the fact that nobody could tell, herself least of all, what she would do next. Frank, generous, open hearted, impulsive and headstrong, her rod of iron was incased in velvet, and her most imperious commands purrled themselves into favors bestowed.

She was fond of excitement and mystery. What woman is not? She was conscious that for the first time in her life she was part and parcel with a romance and that she stood upon the very verge of a precipice that overlooked a mystery of the most remarkable kind. Her heart bled for the girl upon the bed whose father, yesterday a strong and vigorous man, was now a corpse, and she was dismayed by the magnitude of the task that confronted her. Thinking what she had to do! The measure of consolation which it was her duty to administer to the orphan paled into insignificance in the presence of the revelation for which fate had destined her to be the medium. The young girl whose form was stretched upon the bed had believed that she was a mere tool, had been used, dressed, all manner, had been educated to regard them as inferior creatures. She must be told, and at once, that she belonged to that despised class, and the knowledge promised to impart a sorrow as poignant as had that other event which had left her fatherless.

It was possible that the disappointment and dismay occasioned by the revelation might neutralize the agony occasioned by the death of her father; it was possible that it might augment her grief; no one could foresee the consequences to her of this unprecedented chain of events; but whatever those consequences might be they must be met, and the only human being in all the world who by reason of the sudden knowledge thrust upon her was competent to meet them was a young girl, just past 18, whose understanding of the questions with which she had to cope was limited to the experiences of a maiden whose entire life had been surrounded by every safeguard that a doting father could marshal to his aid when circumstances had compelled him to rear and to bring to maturity a motherless daughter. Erna's innocence, ignorance, however, rendered her strong for the task. She took the girl aside more readily because she did not realize that a maid involved. Her innocence was as complete as Lisle's, her ignorance as profound. Solitary speculation had carried the latter into regions which Erna had never regarded as worthy of exploration. She had lived all her life in such near proximity to the mysteries of creation that she had been unconscious of their existence. Lisle had been isolated so far away from them that when the knowledge came to her that they did exist she had striven with all her soul, gropingly, in the dark, but certainly in search of light, and the two girls stood upon equal ground, half way to the goal to be attained, but widely separated by their journeys. Like two who, having started at the same point, but in opposite directions, to meet again at the other side of the world, pause when only half the journey is made, neither one wiser than the other. One had searched through the darkness toward the light eagerly; the other had wandered with the light without being aware that the night dwelt anywhere upon the earth, until across that infinite space which separated her from the other that still voice called to her for aid.

Therefore when Erna, having put her father from the room, turned and beheld Lisle's eyes fixed upon her, she hastened to the bed, dropped upon her knees and did the very thing that she was resolved not to do—burst into tears. And while she cried she put out her arms and wound them around Lisle's neck, half of her cheeks against the cool, white face of the orphan and so compelled the one who should have received consolation to administer it.

It was in a crisis like this where Lisle Maxwell's masculine training served her best. She scorned all her woman's heart had faltered and faint beneath the sudden blow of her father's death. Nature had proved herself stronger than the education of years. But it was different now. The shock had come, the blow had fallen. She had yielded to the overwhelming effects, but she would not falter again. "Why do you cry?" she asked, rising to a sitting posture and gently but firmly disengaging the clinging arms around her neck. "It is my father, not yours, who is dead. I do not cry. Why do you weep? For me?"

"For you, Lisle. It was so sudden, so awful!"

Erna's tears ceased to flow. She bethought herself suddenly of the situation: Lisle habited as a man, belaying herself to be one, sitting upon the edge of the dismantled bed; Erna upon her knees before her, scantly clad, with her disheveled hair like spun gold distributing its rays over her bare shoulders and upon the trossered knees of her companion, the morning sun streaming in through the window, gilding the scene with glory, bestowing its warm approval upon a scene before which an uninform'd beholder would have reeled in dismay. The girl who believed herself to be a man, profoundly ignorant that such things as conventional proprieties existed, realized nothing unusual in the situation. The girl who had been taught to observe them

with religious care realized its absurdity.

Her face blushed scarlet. Her eyes danced with unbidden mirth, and a smile crept stealthily to her lips and softened and parted them while it glistered upon the smooth skin of her cheek. She bent to her feet and took a step or two backward, and Lisle, being free, also rose. Thus they stood facing each other, and Lisle, for the first time, discovered that her flannel shirt was open. She did not blush. The circumstance affected her only as it would have affected a child.

"How came I here in this room?" she asked wonderingly. "Did I swoon? Did I lose consciousness? Did you bring me here?"

"Yes, to all of your questions," replied Erna. "You were unconscious so long a time that I thought it best. Sit down again. I wish to talk with you."

"You do not look strong enough to carry me," murmured Lisle slowly, conscious that she was amazed that Erna should have carried her, yet won-

dered slowly and wonderingly,

Lisle eyes studied the blushing face before her with an expression that was filled with awe.

"Are they not?" she asked presently.

"Are men created after one mold and women after another?"

"Certainly."

"Always?"

"Always."

"Is that all the difference?"

"Of course not, you goose!"

"What are the other differences?"

"Why, everything is different, I suppose."

"Do you only suppose? Don't you know?"

"Oh, dear! Come into the house. Let us go back to my room. We can talk better there. You look so much like a man in that dress that out here I feel as though the eyes of the whole world upon us."

"And if the eyes of the world were upon us, what then? Is there any thing to be ashamed of?"

"Not that is, not really. But it looks so. Come, will you go back?"

"Yes."

They returned together to the house, and Erna, having closed and locked the door of her room, began again her difficult task.

"Now, Lisle," she said, "please hear me through to the end of what I am going to say without asking questions. Every one you know is likely to be surprised that I least expect, and it may be quite sure to be the one that I do not in the least know how to answer—that is, not in words. I never knew before today how ignorant I am myself of things that I ought to know. That is, I thought all the while I knew about them, while the fact is I do not know much more than you do yourself. I suppose it is for the same reason that the Egyptians never thought of studying their own pyramids until a lot of foreigners blew into the country and discovered that the hieroglyphic writings meant something. I have lived next door to the pyramids all my life and never thought them worth the trouble of study, and now you have materialized on the scene, and you want to know all at once every secret that is connected with them. Now I can show you the way to the pyramids, but I do not in the least know what the writings mean. Did you ever read the Bible?"

"My father used to read it to me."

"Did he ever read about the garden of Eden?"

"No; I do not remember it."

"It is about a woman, and a tree, and a serpent."

"Of course not. It is about a woman, and he wouldn't read the tree. Why?"

"I do not know what he means."

"She darted away before Lisle could reply, was gone a moment and returned.

"You may go to the room where your father is," she said. "Papa is there. After that wait for me at the front door. Then we will go to the grove to-gether."

Lisle left her to her toilet and went slowly toward the chamber where rested the still form of Richard Maxwell. Mr. Thomas was there and two of the servants also. They stood respectfully aside when Lisle entered the room, passed to the bedside and with folded arms stood for several moments quietly regarding the silent sleeper. Bending low, Lisle touched her lips against the cold, dead face, then went out from the room, moving like one who walks in a dream.

Fifteen minutes later, beneath the spreading boughs of the pines, Lisle and Erna stood facing each other.

"What will you do now, Lisle?" asked Erna. "You cannot remain here without your father."

"Why, yes, I will remain. There is nothing else for me to do. I am familiar with every detail connected with the operation of the ranch. It is the only place that I do know. There is no place else for me to go. I know nothing of the world—your world. Mine is here; its boundaries are there."

"They are here in the house," she said. "I give orders last night about them. Shall I have them brought here?"

"No. If they are safe, that is all I care. The clothes we have on are all we need. We will change. You shall wear these, and I will try yours. Take them off."

"In your presence?"

"I have been taught by my father never to—"

"Bother your teaching! I am your teacher now!"

"Well, at least need not put these on," said Lisle. "I have other apparel here. That she had a much better suit than this one."

"A secret! My father never had a secret from me—never!"

"He had one secret, Lisle."

"How can you know that he had a secret from me? He scarcely spoke to you."

"I discovered it myself, Lisle."

"How? When? Where? What is this secret?"

"I discovered it last night when you kissed me, I believe I did. After you failed to see me, I did. I do over you, I became convinced of its truth. It will startle you when I tell you that I am afraid that it will pain him. I concern you; it is about you. Have you ever thought, Lisle, that you are a woman?"

"Yes, often," Lisle spoke dreamily. "There," she said, "is the secret. You are not like other men; you are not like men at all. Lisle, dear Lisle, you are not a man; you never were a man; you never can be a man; you are a woman, Lisle, a woman like me."

CHAPTER XI.

SOME REVELATIONS.

**L**ISLE MAXWELL remained perfectly still, staring hard at Erna. She heard the words, but she did not, could not, comprehend them. Erna had a passion outburst of passionate anger or vehement unbelief. There was neither. Somehow her earnestness had impressed the truth of her statement upon her companion. It may be that without realizing it Lisle was prepared for the announcement. It certainly meant less to her than Erna could have supposed that it would.

"Tell me more," she said presently.

"For you, Lisle. It was so sudden,

so awful!"

Erna's tears ceased to flow. She bethought herself suddenly of the situation: Lisle habited as a man, belaying herself to be one, sitting upon the edge of the dismantled bed; Erna upon her knees before her, scantly clad, with her disheveled hair like spun gold distributing its rays over her bare shoulders and upon the trossered knees of her companion, the morning sun streaming in through the window, gilding the scene with glory, bestowing its warm approval upon a scene before which an uninform'd beholder would have reeled in dismay. The girl who believed herself to be a man, profoundly ignorant that such things as conventional proprieties existed, realized nothing unusual in the situation. The girl who had been taught to observe them

cover that I am a woman? How may I know that I am one?"

"I believe," replied Erna, "that your own heart has told you already that you are not a man. Don't you see that you are like me?"

"Like you? No. I do not think that I am in the least like you. I am taller, broader, bigger in every way. We are not alike; we are very different."

"Oh, dear! Throw off your coat and waistcoat again, as you were this morning when you called me to go to your father. There! Do you not see that your hips are like mine. Press your sides, so here at your waist. Now do the same to me. I have left off my instruments of torture, and so I am not able to bind you this morning. Don't you see that, though larger than I am, you are shaped the same? Men are not formed that way."

"Lisle obeyed slowly and wonderingly. Her pale eyes studied the blushing face before her with an expression that was filled with awe.

"Are they not?" she asked presently.

"Are men created after one mold and women after another?"

"Certainly."

"Always?"

"Always."

"Is that all the difference?"

"Of course not, you goose!"

"What are the other differences?"

"Why, everything is different, I suppose."

"Do you only suppose? Don't you know?"

"Goodness gracious, yes! I hope so. Heaven, you almost frightened me. Don't you see that, as small as I am, my instruments of torture need but very little letting out in order to reach

you so very uncomfortable?"

"I feel as though I were in a vice. Must I wear clothing like this always?"

"Always!" with a vehement nod. Then, with sudden emphasis and wisdom, Erna added: "But not at once. The people on this ranch must not know of the discovery we have made, at least not now. You must be to them as you have always been."

"Why?"

"Because you would not be safe here if they knew that you are a woman."

"Why? Do all men hate women so? Would they seek to kill me?"

"Kill you? Not, but you would not be safe."

"But I do not fear them."

"Of course not. That isn't the question. I do not exactly know what is the question, only that it would not be just the thing to do now. When Craig Thompson comes, we will take him into our confidence. He shall tell you what to do; papa shall tell you what to do."

"You are sure, very sure, that I am a woman, Erna?"

"Goodness gracious, yes! I hope so. Heaven, you almost frightened me. Don't you see that, as small as I am, my instruments of torture need but very little letting out in order to reach

## BARNSTABLE'S PLAN.

COD COD TOWN SOLVES THE GOOD ROADS PROBLEM.

WHILE EXPEND \$75,000 ON STONE ROADS IN A TERM OF THREE YEARS—DEBT TO BE PAID IN SEVEN ANNUAL PAYMENTS OF \$7,500.

A MATTER OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE RESIDENTS OF CAPE COD AND ONE WHICH IS PRESENTLY BEING CONSIDERED BY THE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT.

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT THERE IS NOTHING THE MATTER WITH HIM," SAID THE OLD DOCTOR TELLS A SECRET OF HIS PROFESSION.

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO DISEASES, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A SICKNESS."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO CURE, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A MEDICINE."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO REMEDY, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A PLACID."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO PAIN, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A PLEASURABLE."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO DISEASE, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A DISEASE."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO MEDICINE, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A MEDICINE."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO REMEDY, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A REMEDY."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO PAIN, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A PAIN."

"NEVER TELL A PATIENT THAT HE HAS NO DISEASE, BUT TELL HIM HE HAS A DISEASE."

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