

TOMMY AND GRIZEL

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CHAPTER XXVII

GRIZEL'S JOURNEY



NOTHING could have been less expected. In the beginning of May its leaves had lost something of their greenness, it seemed to be hesitating, but she coaxed it over the hill, and since then it had scarcely needed her hand, almost lightly-headedly it hurried into its summer clothes, and new buds broke out on it, like smiles, at the fascinating thought that there was to be a to-morrow. Grizel's plant had never been so brave in its little life, when suddenly it turned back.

That was the day on which Elspeth and David were leaving for a fortnight's holiday with his relatives by the sea, for Elspeth needed and was getting special devotion just now, and Grizel knew why. She was glad they were going, it was well that they should not be there to ask questions if she also must set forth on a journey.

For more than a week she waited, and everything she could do for her plant she did. She watched it so carefully that she might have deceived herself into believing that it was only standing still had there been no night-time. She thought she had not perhaps been sufficiently good, and she tried to be better, more ostentatiously satisfied with her lot; never had she forced herself to work quite so hard for others as in those few days, and then when she came home it had drooped a little more.

When she was quite sure that it was dying, she told Corp she was going to London by that night's train. "He is ill, Corp, and I must go to him."

"Ill! But how had he let her know?"

"He has found a way," she said, with a tremulous smile. He wanted her to

telegraph, but no, she would place no faith in telegrams.

At least she could telegraph to Elspeth and the doctor. One of them would go.

"It is I who am going," she said, quietly. "I can't wait any longer. It was a promise, Corp. He loves me." They were the only words she said which suggest that there was anything strange about Grizel at this time.

Corp saw how determined she was when she revealed, incidentally, that she had drawn a sum of money out of the bank a week ago, "to be ready."

"What will folk say!" he cried.

"You can tell Gavinia the truth when I am gone," she told him; "she will know better than you what to say to other people," and that was some comfort to him, for it put the burden of invention upon his wife. So it was Corp who saw Grizel off. He was in great distress himself about Tommy, but he kept a courageous face for her, and his last words flung in at the carriage-window were, "Now dinna be down-hearted; I'm nain down-hearted mysel, for we're very sure he'll find a w'y." And Grizel smiled and nodded, and the train turned the bend that shuts out the little town of Thrums. The town vanishes quickly, but the quarry we howked it out of stands grim and red, watching the train for many a mile.

Of Grizel's journey to London there are no particulars to tell. She was wearing her brown jacket and fur cap because Tommy had liked them, and she sat straight and stiff all the way. She had never been in a train since she was a baby, except two or three times to Tilliedrum, and she thought this was the right way to sit. Always when the train stopped, which was at long intervals, she put her head out at the window and asked if this was the train to London. Every

station a train stops at in the middle of the night is the infernal regions, and she shuddered to hear lost souls clanking their chains, which is what a milk-can becomes on its way to the van, but still she asked if this was the train to London. When fellow-passengers addressed her, she was very modest and cautious in her replies. Sometimes a look of extraordinary happiness, of radiance, passed over her face, and may have puzzled them. It was part of the thought that, however ill he might be, she was to see him now.

She did not see him as soon as she expected, for at the door of Tommy's lodgings they told her that he had departed suddenly for the Continent about a week ago. He was to send an address by and by to which letters could be forwarded. Was he quite well when he went away? Grizel asked, shaking.

The landlady and her daughter thought he was rather peakish, but he had not complained.

He went away for his health, Grizel informed them, and he was very ill now. Oh, could they not tell her where he was! All she knew was that he was very ill. "I am engaged to be married to him," she said, with dignity. Without this strange certainty that Tommy loved her at last, she could not have trod the road which faced her now. Even when she had left the house, where at their suggestion she was to call to-morrow, she found herself wondering at once what he would like her to do now, and she went straight to a hotel and had her box sent to it from the station, and she remained there all day because she thought that this was what he would like her to do. She sat bolt upright on a cane-chair in her bedroom, praying to God with her eyes open; she was begging Him to let Tommy tell her where he was, and promising to return home at once if he did not need her.

Next morning they showed her, at his lodgings, two lines in a newspaper, which said that he was ill with bronchitis at the Hôtel Krone, Bad-Platten, in Switzerland.

It may have been an answer to her prayer, as she thought, but we know now how the paragraph got into print. On the previous evening the landlady had met Mr. Pym on the ladder of an omni-

bus and told him, before they could be plucked apart, of the lady who knew that Mr. Sandys was ill. It must be bronchitis again. Pym was much troubled; he knew that the Krone at Bad-Platten had been Tommy's destination. He talked that day, and one of the company was a reporter; which accounts for the paragraph.

Grizel found out how she could get to Bad-Platten. She left her box behind her, at the cloak-room of the railway station, where I suppose it was sold years afterward. From Dover she sent a telegram to Tommy, saying, "I am coming: Grizel."

On entering the train at Calais she had a railway journey of some thirty hours, broken by two changes only. She could speak a little French, but all the use she made of it was to ask repeatedly if she was in the right train. An English lady, who travelled with her for many hours, woke up now and again to notice that this quiet prim-looking girl was always sitting erect with her hand on her umbrella, as if ready to leave the train at any moment. The lady pointed out some of the beauties of the scenery to her and Grizel tried to attend. "I am afraid you are unhappy," her companion said, at last.

"That is not why I am crying," Grizel said, "I think I am crying because I am so hungry."

The stranger gave her sandwiches and claret, as cold as the rivers that raced the train, and Grizel told her, quite frankly, why she was going to Bad-Platten. She did not tell his name, only that he was ill, and that she was engaged to him and he had sent for her. She believed it all. The lady was very sympathetic and gave her information about the diligence by which the last part of Grizel's journey must be made, and also said: "You must not neglect your meals, if only for his sake, for how can you nurse him back to health if you arrive at Bad-Platten ill yourself? Consider his distress if he were to be told that you were in the inn, but not able to go to him."

"Oh," Grizel cried, rocking her arms for the first time since she knew her plant was drooping. She promised to be very practical henceforth, so as to have strength to take her place by his side at once. It

was strange that she who was so good a nurse had forgotten these things, so strange that it alarmed her, as if she feared that, without being able to check herself, she was turning into some other person.

The station where she alighted was in a hubbub of life; everyone seemed to leave the train here and to resent the presence of all the others. They were mostly English. The men hung back, as if now that there was business to be done in some foolish tongue they had better leave the ladies to do it. Many of them seemed prepared if there was dissension to disown their woman-kind and run for it. They looked haughty and nervous. Such of them as had tried to shave in the train were boasting of it and holding handkerchiefs to their chins. The ladies were moving about in a masterful way, carrying bunches of keys. When they had done everything, the men went and stood by their sides again.

Outside the station buses and carriages were innumerable and everybody was shouting, but Grizel saw that nearly all her fellow-passengers were hurrying by foot or conveyance to one spot, all desirous of being there first, and she thought it must be the place where the diligence started from, and pressed on with them. It proved to be a hotel where they all wanted the best bedroom, and many of them had telegraphed for it, and they gathered round a man in uniform and demanded that room of him, but he treated them as if they were little dogs and he was not the platter, and soon they were begging for a room on the fourth floor at the back, and swelling with triumph if they got it. The scrimmage was still going on when Grizel slipped out of the hotel, having learned that the diligence would not start until the following morning. It was still early in the afternoon. How could she wait until to-morrow?

Bad-Platten was forty miles away. The road was pointed out to her; it began to climb at once. She was to discover that for more than thirty miles it never ceased to climb. She sat down, hesitating, on a little bridge that spanned a horrible rushing white stream. Poets have sung the glories of that stream, but it sent a shiver through her. On all sides she was

caged in by a ring of splendid mountains, but she did not give them one admiring glance (there is a special spot where the guide-books advise you to stop for a moment to do it); her one passionate desire was to fling out her arms and knock them over.

She had often walked twenty miles in a day, in a hill country too, without feeling tired, and there seemed no reason why she should not set off now. There were many inns on the way, she was told, where she could pass the night. There she could get the diligence next day. This would not bring her any sooner to him than if she waited here until to-morrow, but how could she sit still till to-morrow? She must be moving, she seemed to have been sitting still for an eternity. "I must not do anything rash," she told herself, carefully. "I must arrive at Bad-Platten able to sit down beside him the moment I have taken off my jacket—oh, without waiting to take off my jacket." She went into the hotel and ate some food, just to show herself how careful she had become. About three o'clock she set off. She had a fierce desire to get away from that heartless white stream and the crack of whips and the doleful pine-woods, and at first she walked very quickly, but she never got away from them, for they marched with her. It was not that day but the next that Grizel thought anything was marching with her. That day her head was quite clear, and she kept her promise to herself, and as soon as she felt tired she stopped for the night at a village inn. But when she awoke very early next morning she seems to have forgotten that she was to travel the rest of the way by diligence, for after a slight meal she started off again on foot and she was walking all day.

She passed through many villages so like each other that in time she thought they might be the same. There was always a monster inn whence one carriage was departing as another drove up, and there was a great stone water-tank in which women drew their washing back and forward and a big yellow dog looked on, and at the doors of painted houses children stood. You knew they were children by their size only. The one person she spoke to that day was a child

who offered her a bunch of wild-flowers. No one was looking and Grizel kissed her and then hurried on.

The carriage passed and repassed her. There must have been a hundred of them, but in time they became one. No sooner had it disappeared in dust, in front of her than she heard the crack of its whip behind.

It was a glorious day of sweltering sun, but she was bewildered now and did not open the umbrella with which she had shielded her head yesterday. In the foreground were always the same white road, on both sides the same pine wood, magnificent with wild-flowers, the same roaring white stream. From somewhere near came the tinkle of cow-bells. Far away on heights, if she looked up, were villages made of match-boxes. She saw what were surely the same villages if she looked down. Or the one was the reflection of the other, in the sky above or in a valley below. They stood out so vividly that they might have been within arm's reach. They were so small that she felt she could extinguish them with her umbrella. Near them was the detestably picturesque castle perched upon a bracket, everywhere that loathly waterfall, here and there squares of cultivated land that looked like doormats flung out upon the hill-sides. The huge mountains raised their jagged heads through the snow and were so sharp edged that they might have been clipped out of cardboard. The sky was blue, without a flaw, but lost clouds crawled like snakes between heaven and earth. All day the sun scorched her, but the night was very cold.

From early morn till evening she climbed to get away from them, but they all marched with her. They waited while she slept. She woke up in an inn, and could have cried with delight because she saw nothing but bare walls. But as soon as she reached the door, there they all were, ready for her. An hour after she set off she again reached that door, and she stopped at it to ask if this was the inn where she had passed the night. Everything had turned with her. Two squalls of sudden rain drenched her that day, and she forced her way through the first but sought a covering from the second.

It was then afternoon, and she was passing through a village by a lake. Since Grizel's time monster hotels have trampled the village to death, and the shuddering lake reflects all day the most hideous of caravansaries flung together as with a giant shovel in one of the loveliest spots on earth. Even then some of the hotels had found it out. Grizel drew near to two of them, and saw wet halls full of open umbrellas which covered the floor and looked like great beetles. These buildings were too formidable and she dragged herself past them. She came to a garden of hops and evergreens, wet chairs were standing in the deserted walks, and here and there was a little arbor. She went into one of these arbors and sat down, and soon slid to the floor.

The place was St. Gian, some miles from Bad-Platten, but one of the umbrellas she had seen was Tommy's. Others belonged to Mrs. Jerry and Lady Pippinworth.

CHAPTER XXVIII

TWO OF THEM



WHEN Tommy started impulsively on what proved to be his only continental trip he had expected to join Mrs. Jerry and her step-daughter at Bad-Platten. They had been there for a fortnight and "The place is a dream," Mrs. Jerry had said in the letter pressing him to come, but it was at St. Gian that she met the diligence and told him to descend. Bad-Platten, she explained, was a horror.

Her fuller explanation was that she was becoming known there as the round lady.

"Now am I as round as all that?" she said, plaintively, to Tommy.

"Mrs. Jerry," he replied, with emotion, "you must not ask me what I think of you." He always treated her with extraordinary respect and chivalry now, and it awed her.

She had looked too, too round because she was in the company of Lady Pippinworth. Everyone seemed to be too round or too large by the side of that gifted lady, who somehow never looked too thin. She

knew her power. When there were women in the room whom she disliked she merely went and stood beside them. In the gyrations of the dance the onlooker would momentarily lose sight of her; she went out and in like a candle. Men could not dance with her without its being said that they were getting stout. There is nothing they dislike so much, yet they did dance with her. Tommy, having some slight reason, was particularly sensitive about references to his figure, yet it was Lady Pippinworth who had drawn him to Switzerland. What was her strange attraction?

Calmly considered she was preposterously thin, but men at least could not think of her thinness only, unless, when walking with her, they became fascinated by its shadow on the ground. She was tall, and had a very clear pale complexion and light brown hair. Light brown, too, were her heavy eyelashes, which were famous for being black-tipped, as if a brush had touched them, though it had not. She made play with her eyelashes as with a fan, and sometimes the upper and lower seemed to entangle for a moment and be in difficulties, from which you wanted to extricate them in the tenderest manner. And the more you wanted to help her the more disdainfully she looked at you. Yet though she looked disdainful she also looked helpless. Now we have the secret of her charm.

This helpless disdain was the natural expression of her face, and I am sure she fell asleep with a curl of the lip. Her scorn of them so maddened men that they could not keep away from her. "Damn!" they said under their breath, and rushed to her. If rumor is to be believed, Sir Harry Pippinworth proposed to her in a fury brought on by the sneer with which she had surveyed his family portraits. I know nothing more of Sir Harry except that she called him Pips, which seems to settle him.

"They will be calling me the round gentleman," Tommy said, ruefully, to her that evening as he strolled with her toward the lake, and indeed he was looking stout. Mrs. Jerry did not accompany them, she wanted to be seen with her trying step-daughter as little as possible, and Tommy's had been the happy proposal that

he should attend them alternately, "fling away my own figure to save yours," he had said, gallantly, to Mrs. Jerry.

"Do you mind?" Lady Pippinworth asked.

"I mind nothing," he replied, "so long as I am with you."

He had not meant to begin so near the point where they had last left off, he had meant to begin much farther back, but an irresistible desire came over him to make sure that she really did permit him to say this sort of thing.

Her only reply was a flutter of the little fans, and a most contemptuous glance.

"Alice," said Tommy, in the old way.

"Well?"

"You don't understand what it is to me to say Alice again."

"Many people call me Alice."

"But they have a right to."

"I supposed you thought you had a right to also?"

"No," said Tommy. "That is why I do it."

She strolled on more scornful and helpless than ever. Apparently it did not matter what one said to Lady Pippinworth, her pout kept it within the proprieties.

There was a magnificent sunset that evening, which dyed a snow-topped mountain pink. "That is what I came all the way from London to see," Tommy remarked, after they had gazed at it.

"I hope you feel repaid," she said, a little tartly.

"You mistake my meaning," he replied. "I had heard of these wonderful effects, and an intense desire came over me to see you looking disdainfully at them. Yes, I feel amply repaid. Did you notice, Alice, or was it but a fancy of my own, that when he had seen the expression on your face the sun quite slunk away?"

"I wonder you don't do so also," she retorted. She had no sense of humor and was rather stupid, so it is no wonder that the men ran after her.

"I am more gallant than the sun," said he. "If I had been up there in its place, Alice, and you had been looking at me I could never have set."

She pouted contemptuously, which meant, I think, that she was well pleased. Yet though he seemed to be complimenting her, she was not sure of him, she had

never been sure of Tommy, nor, indeed, he of her, which was probably why they were so interested in each other still.

"Do you know," Tommy said, "what I have told you is really at least half the truth? If I did not come here to see you disdaining the sun I think I did come to see you disdaining me. Odd, is it not, if true, that a man should travel so far to see a lip curl up?"

"You don't seem to know what brought you," she said.

"It seems so monstrous," he replied, musing. "Oh, yes, I am quite certain that the curl of the lip is responsible for my being here, it kept sending me constant telegrams; but what I want to know is, do I come for the pleasure of the thing or for the pain? Do I like your disdain, Alice, or does it make me writhe? Am I here to beg you to do it again or to defy it?"

"Which are you doing now?" she inquired.

"I had hoped," he said, with a sigh, "that you could tell me that."

On another occasion they reached the same point in this discussion and went a little beyond it. It was on a wet afternoon, too, when Tommy had vowed to himself to mend his ways. "That disdainful look is you," he told her, "and I admire it more than anything in nature, and yet, Alice, and yet——"

"Well?" she answered, coldly, but not moving, though he had come suddenly too near her. They were on a veranda of the hotel, and she was lolling in a wicker chair.

"And yet," he said, intensely, "I am not certain that I would not give the world to have the power to drive that look from your face. That, I begin to think, is what brought me here."

"But you are not sure," she said, with a shrug of the shoulder.

It stung him into venturing farther than he had ever gone with her before. Not too gently he took her head in both his hands and forced her to look up at him. She submitted without a protest. She was disdainful but helpless.

"Well?" she said again.

He withdrew his hands, and she smiled, mockingly.

"If I thought——" he cried with sudden passion, and stopped.

"You think a great deal, don't you?" she said. She was going now.

"If I thought there was any blood in your veins, you icy woman——"

"Or in your own," said she. But she said it a little fiercely, and he noticed that.

"Alice," he cried, "I know now. It is to drive that look from your face that I am here."

She dropped him a courtesy from the door. She was quite herself again.

But for that moment she had been moved. He was convinced of it, and his first feeling was of exultation as in an achievement. I don't know what you are doing just now, Lady Pippinworth, but my compliments to you, and T. Sandys is swelling.

There followed on this exultation another feeling as sincere, devout thankfulness that he had gone no farther. He drew deep breaths of relief over his escape, but knew that he had not himself to thank. His friends, the little sprites, had done it, in return for the amusement he seemed to give them. They had stayed him in the nick of time, but not earlier; it was quite as if they wanted Tommy to have his fun first. So often they had saved him from being spitted, how could he guess that the great catastrophe was fixed for to-night, and that henceforth they were to sit round him counting his wriggles, as if this new treatment of him tickled them even more than the other?

But he was too clever not to know that they might be fattening him for some very special feast, and his thanks took the form of a vow to need their help no more. Tomorrow he would begin to climb the mountains around St. Gian; if he danced attendance on her dangerous ladyship again, Mrs. Jerry should be there also, and he would walk circumspectly between them like a man with gyves upon his wrists. He was in the midst of all the details of these reforms when suddenly he looked at himself thus occupied and laughed bitterly, he had so often come upon Tommy making grand resolves.

He stopped operations and sat down beside them. No one could have wished more heartily to be anybody else, or have had less hope. He had not even the excuse of being passionately drawn to this woman: he remembered that she had

never interested him until he heard of her effect upon other men. Her reputation as a duellist, whose defence none of his sex could pass, had led to his wondering what they saw in her, and he had dressed himself in their sentiments and so approached her. There were times in her company when he forgot that he was wearing borrowed garments, when he went on flame, but he always knew, as now, upon reflection. Nothing seemed easier at this moment than to fling them aside—with one jerk they were on the floor. Obviously it was only vanity that had inspired him, and vanity was satisfied: the easier, therefore, to stop. Would you like to make the woman unhappy, Tommy? You know you would not; you have somewhere about you one of the softest hearts in the world. Then desist, be satisfied that you did thaw her once and grateful that she so quickly froze again. "I am, indeed I am," he responds; "no one could have himself better in hand for the time being than I, and if a competition in morals were now going on I should certainly take the medal, but I cannot speak for myself an hour in advance; I make a vow, as I have done so often before, but it does not help me to know what I may be at before the night is out."

When his disgust with himself was at its height he suddenly felt like a little god. His new book had come into view. He flicked a finger at his reflection in a mirror. "That for you," he said, defiantly, "at least I can write, I can write at last. What else matters?"

The manuscript lay almost finished at the bottom of his trunk. It could not easily have been stolen for one hour without his knowing. Just when he was about to start on a walk with one of the ladies he would run upstairs to make sure that it was still there; he made sure by feeling, and would turn again at the door to make sure by looking. Miser never listened to the crispness of bank-notes with more avidity, woman never spent more time in shutting and opening her jewel-box.

"I can write at last!" He knew that, comparatively speaking, he had never been able to write before. He remembered the fuss that had been made about his former books. "Pooh!" he said, addressing them contemptuously.

Once more he drew his beloved manuscript from its hiding-place. He did not mean to read, only to fondle, but his eye chancing to fall on a special passage—two hours afterward he was interrupted by the dinner-gong. He returned the pages to the box and wiped his eyes. While dressing hurriedly he remembered with languid interest that Lady Pippinworth was staying in the same hotel.

There were a hundred or more at dinner, and they were all saying the same thing: "Where have you been to-day?—Really! but the lower path is shadier.—Is this your first visit?—The glacier is very nice.—Were you caught in the rain?—The view from the top is very nice.—After all, the rain lays the dust.—They give you two sweets at Bad-Platten and an ice on Sunday.—The sunset is very nice.—The poulet is very nice." The hotel is open during the summer months only, but probably the chairs in the dining-room and the knives and forks in their basket make these remarks to each other every evening throughout the winter.

Being a new-comer Tommy had not been placed beside either of his friends, who sat apart, "not," Mrs. Jerry said, "that I am afraid of her in evening dress (at least so long as we are sitting), but she calls me mamma, and I am not going to stand that." For some time he gave thought to neither of them; he was engrossed in what he had been reading, and it turned him into a fine and magnanimous character. When gradually her ladyship began to flit among his reflections it was not to disturb them, but because she harmonized. He wanted to apologize to her. The apology grew in grace as the dinner progressed; it was so charmingly composed that he was profoundly stirred by it.

The opportunity came presently in the hall, where it is customary after dinner to lounge or stroll if you are afraid of the night-air. Or if you do not care for music, you can go into the drawing-room and listen to the piano.

"I am sure mamma is looking for you everywhere," Lady Pippinworth said, when Tommy took a chair beside her. "It is her evening, you know."

"Surely you would not drive me away," he replied, with a languishing air, and then

smiled at himself, for he was done with this sort of thing. "Lady Pippinworth," said he, firmly—it needs firmness when of late you have been saying "Alice."

"Well?"

"I have been thinking——" Tommy began.

"I am sure you have," she said.

"I have been thinking——" he went on, determinedly, "that I played a poor part this afternoon. I had no right to say what I said to you."

"As far as I can remember," she answered, "you did not say very much."

"It is like your generosity, Lady Pippinworth," he said, "to make light of it, but let us be frank. I made love to you."

Anyone looking at his expressionless face and her lazy disdain (and there were many in the hall) would have guessed that their talk was of where were you to-day, and what should I do to-morrow.

"You don't really mean that?" her ladyship said, incredulously. "Think, Mr. Sandys, before you tell me anything more. Are you sure you are not confusing me with mamma?"

"I did it," said Tommy, remorsefully.

"In my absence?" she asked.

"When you were with me on the veranda."

Her eyes opened to their widest, so surprised that the lashes had no time for their usual play.

"Was that what you call making love, Mr. Sandys?" she inquired.

"I call a spade a spade."

"And now you are apologizing to me, I understand?"

"If you can in the goodness of your heart forgive me, Lady Pippinworth——"

"Oh, I do," she said, heartily, "I do. But how stupid you must have thought me, not even to know! I feel that it is I who ought to apologize. What a number of ways there seem to be of making love, and yours is such an odd way."

Now to apologize for playing a poor part is one thing, and to put up with the charge of playing a part poorly is quite another. Nevertheless he kept his temper.

"You have discovered an excellent way of punishing me," he said, manfully, "and I submit. Indeed, I admire you the more. So I am paying you a com-

pliment when I whisper that I know you knew."

But she would not have it. "You are so strangely dense to-night," she said. "Surely if I had known, I would have stopped you. You forget that I am a married woman," she added, remembering Pips rather late in the day.

"There might be other reasons why you did not stop me," he replied, impulsively.

"Such as?"

"Well, you—you might have wanted me to go on."

He blurted it out.

"So," said she, slowly, "you are apologizing to me for 'not going on'?"

"I implore you, Lady Pippinworth," Tommy said, in much distress, "not to think me capable of that. If I moved you for a moment, I am far from boasting of it—it makes me only the more anxious to do what is best for you."

This was not the way it had shaped during dinner, and Tommy would have acted wisely had he now gone out to cool his head. "If you moved me?" she repeated, interrogatively; but with the best intentions he continued to flounder.

"Believe me," he implored her, "had I known it could be done, I should have checked myself. But they always insist that you are an iceberg, and am I so much to blame if that look of hauteur deceived me with the rest? Oh, dear Lady Disdain," he said, warmly, in answer to one of her most freezing glances, "it deceives me no longer. From that moment I knew you had a heart, and I was shamed. As noble a heart as ever beat in woman," he added. He always tended to add generous bits when he found it coming out well.

"Does the man think I am in love with him!" was Lady Disdain's inadequate reply.

"No, no indeed," he assured her, earnestly, "I am not so vain as to think that, nor so selfish as to wish it. But if for a moment you were moved——"

"But I was not," said she, stamping her shoe.

His dander began to rise, as they say in the north, but he kept grip of politeness.

"If you were moved for a moment, Lady Pippinworth," he went on in a

slightly more determined voice, "I am far from saying that it was so, but if——"

"But as I was not," she said.

It was no use putting things prettily to her when she snapped you up in this way.

"You know you were," he said, reproachfully.

"I assure you," said she, "I don't know what you are talking about, but apparently it is something dreadful, so perhaps one of us ought to go away."

As he did not take this hint, she opened a tattered Tauchnitz which was lying at her elbow. They are always lying at your elbow in a Swiss hotel, with the first pages missing.

Tommy watched her gloomily. "This is unworthy of you," he said.

"What is?"

He was not quite sure, but as he sat there, misgivings entered his mind and began to gnaw. Was it all a mistake of his? Undeniably he did think too much. After all, had she not been moved? S'death!

His restlessness made her look up. "It must be a great load off your mind," she said, with gentle laughter, "to know that your apology was unnecessary."

"It is," Tommy said, "it is." (S'death!) She resumed her book.

So this was how one was rewarded for a generous impulse! He felt very bitter. "So, so," he said, inwardly; also, "Very well, ve-ry well." Then he turned upon himself: "Serves you right," he said, brutally, "better stick to your books, Thomas, for you know nothing about women." To think for one moment that he had moved her! That streak of marble moved! He fell to watching her again, as if she were some troublesome sentence to be licked into shape. As she bent impertinently over her book she was an insult to man. All Tommy's interest in her revived. She infuriated him.

"Alice," he whispered.

"Do keep quiet till I finish this chapter," she begged, lazily.

It brought him at once to the boiling-point.

"Alice!" he said, fervently.

She had noticed the change in his voice. "People are looking," she said, without moving a muscle.

There was some subtle flattery to him in the warning, but he could not ask for

more, for just then Mrs. Jerry came in. She was cloaked for the garden, and he had to go with her, sulkily. At the door she observed that the ground was still wet.

"Are you wearing your goloshes?" said he, brightening. "You must get them, Mrs. Jerry, I insist."

She hesitated. (Her room was on the third floor.) "It is very good of you to be so thoughtful of me," she said, "but——"

"But I have no right to try to take care of you," he interposed, in a melancholy voice, "it is true. Let us go."

"I sha'n't be two minutes," said Mrs. Jerry, in a flutter, and went off hastily for her goloshes, while he looked fondly after her. At the turn of the stair she glanced back and his eyes were still begging her to hurry. It was a gracious memory to her in the after years, for she never saw him again.

As soon as she was gone he returned to the hall, and taking from a peg a cloak with a Mother Goose hood brought it to Lady Pippinworth, who had watched her mamma trip upstairs.

"Did I say I was going out?" she asked.

"Yes," said Tommy, and she rose to let him put the elegant thing round her. She was one of those dangerous women who look their best when you are helping them to put on their cloaks.

"Now," he instructed her, "pull the hood over your head."

"Is it so cold as that?" she said, obeying.

"I want you to wear it," he answered. What he meant was that she never looked quite so impudent as in her hood, and his vanity insisted that she should be armed to the teeth before they resumed hostilities. The red light was in his eyes as he drew her into the garden where Grizel lay.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE RED LIGHT



T was an evening without stars, but fair, sufficient wind to make her ladyship cling haughtily to his arm as they turned corners. Many of the visitors were in the garden, some grouped round a quartet of gayly attired minstrels, but more sitting in little arbors or prowling in search of

an arbor to sit in ; the night was so dark that when our two passed beyond the light of the hotel windows they could scarce see the shrubs they brushed against ; cigars without faces behind them sauntered past ; several times they thought they had found an unoccupied arbor at last, when they heard the clink of coffee-cups.

"I believe the castle dates from the fifteenth century," Tommy would then say, suddenly, though it was not of castles he had been talking.

With a certain satisfaction he noticed that she permitted him, without comment, to bring in the castle on emergencies and to drop it the moment they had passed. But he had little other encouragement. Even when she pressed his arm it was only as an intimation that the castle was needed.

"I can't even make her angry," he said, wrathfully, to himself.

"You answer not a word," he said, in great dejection, to her.

"I am afraid to speak," she admitted. "I don't know who may hear."

"Alice," he said, eagerly, "what would you say if you were not afraid to speak?"

They had stopped, and he thought she trembled a little on his arm, but he could not be sure. He thought—but he was thinking too much again, at least Lady Pippinworth seemed to come to that conclusion, for with a galling little laugh she moved on. He saw, with amazing clearness, that he had thought sufficiently for one day.

On coming into the garden with her, and for some time afterward, he had been studying her so coolly, watching symptoms rather than words, that there is nothing to compare the man to but a doctor, who while he is chatting has his finger on your pulse. But he was not so calm now. Whether or not he had stirred the woman, he was rapidly firing himself.

When next he saw her face by the light of a window, she at the same instant turned her eyes on him, it was as if each wanted to know correctly how the other had been looking in the darkness, and the effect was a challenge.

Like one retreating a step, she lowered her eyes. "I am tired," she said. "I shall go in."

"Let us stroll round once more."

"No, I am going in."

"If you are afraid——" he said, with a slight smile.

She took his arm again. "Though it is too bad of me to keep you out," she said, as they went on, "for you are shivering. Is it the night-air that makes you shiver?" she asked, mockingly.

But she shivered a little herself, as if with a presentiment that she might be less defiant if he were less thoughtful. For a month or more she had burned to teach him a lesson, but there was a time before that, when, had she been sure he was in earnest, she would have preferred to be the pupil.

Two ladies came out of an arbor where they had been drinking coffee, and sauntered toward the hotel. It was a tiny building, half concealed in hops and reached by three steps, and Tommy and his companion took possession. He groped in the darkness for a chair for her, and invited her tenderly to sit down. She said she preferred to stand. She was by the open window, her fingers drumming on the sill. Though he could not see her face, he knew exactly how she was looking.

"Sit down," he said, rather masterfully.

"I prefer to stand," she repeated, languidly.

He had a passionate desire to take her by the shoulders and shake her, but put his hand on hers instead, and she permitted it, like one disdainful but helpless. She said something unimportant about the stillness.

"Is it so still?" he said, in a low voice.

"I seem to hear a great noise. I think it must be the beating of my heart."

"I fancy that is what it is," she drawled.

"Do you hear it?"

"No."

"Did you ever hear your own heart beat, Alice?"

"No."

He had both her hands now. "Would you like to hear it?"

She pulled away her hands sharply.

"Yes," she replied with defiance.

"But you pulled away your hands first," said he.

He heard her breathe heavily for a moment, but she said nothing. "Yes," he said, as if she had spoken, "it is true."

"What is true?"

"What you are saying to yourself just now—that you hate me."

She beat the floor with her foot.

"How you hate me, Alice!"

"Oh, no."

"Yes, indeed you do."

"I wonder why," she said, and she trembled a little.

"I know why." He had come close to her again. "Shall I tell you why?"

She said "No," hurriedly.

"I am so glad you say No." He spoke passionately and yet there was banter in his voice, or so it seemed to her. "It is because you fear to be told, it is because you had hoped that I did not know."

"Tell me why I hate you!" she cried.

"Tell me first that you do."

"Oh, I do, I do indeed!" She said the words in a white heat of hatred.

Before she could prevent him he had raised her hand to his lips.

"Dear Alice!" he said.

"Why is it?" she demanded.

"Listen!" he said. "Listen to your heart, Alice; it is beating now. It is telling you why. Does it need an interpreter? It is saying you hate me because you think I don't love you."

"Don't you?" she asked, fiercely.

"No," Tommy said.

Her hands were tearing each other, and she could not trust herself to speak. She sat down deadly pale in the chair he had offered her.

"No man ever loved you," he said, leaning over her, with his hand on the back of the chair. "You are smiling at that, I know, but it is true, Lady Disdain. They may have vowed to blow their brains out, and seldom did it; they may have let you walk over them and they may have become your fetch-and-carry, for you were always able to drive them crazy: but love does not bring men so low. They tried hard to love you, and it was not that they could not love, it was that you were unlovable. That is a terrible thing to a woman. You think you let them try to love you, that you might make them your slaves when they succeeded, but you made them your slaves because they failed. It is a power given to your cold and selfish nature in place of the capacity for being able to be loved, with which women, not a hundredth part as beautiful as you, are

dowered, and you have a raging desire, Alice, to exercise it over me as over the others, but you can't."

Had he seen her face then it might have warned him to take care, but he heard only her words, and they were not at all in keeping with her face.

"I see I can't," was what she cried, almost in a whisper.

"It is all true, Alice, is it not?"

"I suppose so, I don't know, I don't care." She swung round in her chair and caught his sleeve. Her hands clung to it. "Say you love me now," she said. "I cannot live without your love after this. What shall I do to make you love me. Tell me, and I will do it."

He could not stop himself, for he mistrusted her still.

"I will not be your slave," he said, through his teeth; "you shall be mine."

"Yes, yes."

"You shall submit to me in everything. If I say 'come,' you shall come to where-soever it may be, and if I say 'stay' and leave you forever you shall stay."

"Very well," she said, eagerly. She would have her revenge when he was her slave.

"You can continue to be the haughty Lady Disdain to others, but you shall be only obedient little Alice to me."

"Very well." She drew his arm toward her and pressed her lips upon it. "And for that you will love me a little, won't you? you will love me at last, won't you?" she entreated.

He was a masterful man up to a certain point only. Her humility now tapped him in a new place, and before he knew what he was about he began to run pity.

"To humiliate you so, Alice! I am a dastard, I am not such a dastard as you think me. I wanted to know that you would be willing to do all these things, but I would never have let you do them."

"I am willing to do them."

"No, no." It was he who had her hands now. "It was brutal, but I did it for you, Alice, for you. Don't you see I was doing it only to make a woman of you? You were always adorable, but in a coat of mail that would let love neither in nor out. I have been hammering at it to break it only and free my glorious Alice. We had to fight and

one of us had to give in, you would have flung me away if I had yielded—I had to win to save you.”

“Now I am lost indeed,” he was saying to himself even as it came rushing out of him, and what appalled him most was that worse had probably still to come. He was astride two horses, and both were at the gallop. He flung out his arms as if seeking for something to check him.

As he did so she had started to her feet, listening. It seemed to her that there was someone near them.

He flung out his arms for help, and they fell upon Lady Pippinworth and went round her. He drew her to him. She could hear no breathing now but his.

“Alice, I love you, for you are love itself; it is you I have been chasing since first it rose like a bird at my feet; I never had a passing fancy for any other woman; I always knew that somewhere in the world there must be you and some time this starless night and you for me. You were hidden behind walls of ice; no man had passed them; I broke them down and love leapt to love, and you lie here, my beautiful love, in the arms of its lover.”

He was in a frenzy of passion now, he meant every word of it, and her intention was to turn upon him presently and mock him, this man with whom she had been playing. Oh, the jeering things she had to say! But she could not say them yet. She would give her fool another moment. So she thought, but she was giving it to herself, and as she delayed she was in danger of melting in his arms.

“What does the world look like to you, my darling? You are in it for the first time. You were born but a moment ago. It is dark, that you may not be blinded before you have used your eyes. These are your eyes, dear eyes that do not yet know their purpose; they are for looking at me, little Alice, and mine are for looking into yours. I cannot see you, I have never seen the face of my love—oh, my love, come into the light that I may see your face.”

They did not move. Her head had fallen on his shoulder. She was to give it but a moment, and then—— But the moment had passed and still her hair pressed his cheek. Her eyes were closed. He seemed to have found the

way to woo her. Neither of them spoke. Suddenly they jumped apart. Lady Pippinworth stole to the door. They held their breath and listened.

It was not so loud now, but it was distinctly heard. It had been heavy breathing, and now she was trying to check it and half succeeding, but at the cost of little cries. They both knew it was a woman and that she was in the arbor, on the other side of the little table. She must have been there when they came in.

“Who is that?”

There was no answer to him save the checked breathing and another broken cry. She moved, and it helped him to see vaguely the outlines of a girl who seemed to be drawing back from him in terror. He thought she was crouching now in the farthest corner.

“Come away,” he said. But Lady Pippinworth would not let him go. They must know who this woman was. He remembered that a match-stand usually stood on the tables of those arbors and groped until he found one.

“Who are you?”

He struck a match. They were those French matches that play an infernal interlude before beginning to burn. While he waited he knew that she was begging him with her hands and with cries that were too little to be words not to turn its light on her. But he did.

Then she ceased to cower. The girlish dignity that had been hers so long came running back to her. As she faced him there was even a crooked smile upon her face.

“I woke up,” she said, as if the words had no meaning to herself, but might have some to him.

The match burned out before he spoke, but his face was terrible. “Grizel!” he said, with a shudder; and then as if the discovery was as awful to her as to him she uttered a cry of horror and sped out into the night. He called her name again and sprang after her, but the hand of another woman detained him.

“Who is this girl?” Lady Pippinworth demanded, fiercely, but he did not answer; he recoiled from her with a shudder she was not likely to forget, and hurried on. All that night he searched for Grizel in vain.

(To be continued.)



The Midnight Sun.

WITH ARCTIC HIGHLANDERS

By Walter A. Wyckoff

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPHS

WE sailed in midsummer for North Greenland. Ours was but one of a series of related expeditions, and was made notable by the unfailing good fortune which accompanied us into Kane Basin, past the seventy-ninth parallel of north latitude, and throughout the accomplishment of the various objects with which we embarked, and then home again well before our appointed time. With scarcely a mishap and with not an hour's illness on board, we sailed almost unobstructed to points to which earlier expeditions have pressed their way through serious peril and with loss of health and life. Men who know say that there is nothing more incalculable than the moods of the far North, so that it was by sheer luck that we cruised about Inglefield Gulf and the head waters of Baf-

fin Bay, through Smith Sound into Kane Basin, under an unclouded sun and skies like those of the Mediterranean after spring showers. But all this has been done before, and done with even greater success. Our distinctive good fortune lay chiefly, I think, in the intimate association which we had, chance visitors to the North as we were, with an isolated tribe of Esquimaux which inhabits the coast in settlements scattered from Cape York to Foulke Fjord, and is known to science as the Smith Sound Tribe, and which Sir John Ross named the Arctic Highlanders.

Some day there will be given to the world a fund of scientific knowledge relating to this tribe which can scarcely fail to be of value to anthropology, and, when interpreted into the vernacular, will be of absorbing human interest. Complete iden-