

# HER HEART'S SECRET;

Or, UNDER A SPELL.

BY JEAN WARNER.

## CHAPTER XIII. Fannie's Lover.

There was a moonlight regatta on the river that evening, and loth though she had been to leave her friend, Fannie had at length yielded to Sybil's solicitation, and accompanied her brother and Laurence Grey to the scene of festivity.

Young Grey was passionately fond of aquatic sports, and his pretty little yacht, the "Fannie," was the one indulgence which the self-denying young student allowed himself during these arduous years of toil that were to prepare him for his professional career.

Grave, reticent and dignified, Laurence Grey always seemed especially so beside pretty Fannie Clive, whose gay young life, like that of a butterfly, was all sport, sunshine and gladness. Laurence did not dance and could not flirt; he was stupid at croquet and solemn in conversation.

Fannie kept out of his way as much as possible, and found Fenton Forrest a most delightful set-off to her brother's more favored friend.

Fenton, with his gallant manners and gold lace, his brilliancy and his buttons, his flashing eyes and his clanking spurs, was Fannie's ideal hero—Fenton, who could ride like an Arab and dance like a Frenchman, who could court desperately one half-hour and flirt fatuously the second—Fenton, who never missed a stroke at croquet or a step in the redowa, whose ready wit was equal to all emergencies, and whose ready tongue was equal to the fairest antagonists—Fenton, the gay, the gallant, the graceful, was surely the perfection of manhood; and Fannie fancied herself very much in love indeed.

For the past month he had been her constant cavalier, having suddenly awakened to the astonishing fact that the pretty little Clive girl he used to patronize and tease during his previous visits to Greylawns was "a deuced handsome woman."

And in his fascinating society Fannie had latterly lost sight of her old playmate, Laurence, altogether—Laurence, who had always been ready to take her to school, or church, or concert—whose pretty boat, her namesake, was always at her disposal, whose quiet, brotherly service was always at her command—Laurence, with his kind smile and unassuming friendliness, seemed in contrast with the glorious Fenton, very tame indeed.

But Fenton was in town this evening, and though Fannie felt the regatta would be a very tedious affair without his enlivening presence, she yielded to circumstances and, donning the most charming of boating costumes, resolved—with a sudden conscience-stricken feeling, that she had been rather unfriendly lately—to be as agreeable as possible to her brother's Damon, for the sake of auld lang syne.

Laurence looked his best in his sailor's garb. He was apt to affect a rather stiff, scholarly style in his everyday costume. Now, with his dark brown hair falling in rich waves under his jaunty hat, and his loose collar turned back from his well formed throat, the young student looked, Fannie was forced to acknowledge, quite as handsome as Fenton himself.

And he as so kind, so thoughtful, in his care for her. Such pretty new cushions had been placed in the stern of the boat; such a bright mirror swung in the toy of a cabin, such a dainty supper was packed away, with nautical neatness, in a compact little hamper under the deck.

Fenton would have had plenty of wine and cigars, but he would have thought of the snow-white cottage cheese that was Fannie's especial weakness? or would he have been aware of her great predilection for raspberries and ice cream? Not that Fannie gave any minute attention to these details; she only had a fluttering sense of being daintily and thoughtfully cared for, and knew that Laurence's wise and sober head had planned it all.

And as the evening breeze filled the snowy sails, and the pretty yacht went skimming like a sea-hawk over the waters, whose surface was just silvered with the light of the rising moon, the young student's voice blended in a German boat-song, whose rich melody rivaled Fenton's grandest operatic efforts.

The young girl listened, entranced, while the full, deep notes floated over the shimmering waves and were echoed by the overhanging hills. A strange quiet stole over her; she seemed drifting down a shadowy river into a beautiful land of dreams.

Even after the song ceased she sat still and silent, looking so beautiful in this new mood that Laurence could not take his eyes off her face.

"I'm going to take a smoke," said Herbert lazily, rising from his seat. "I know you hate a pipe, Fan, so I'll get out of the way. You'll make a model husband in that respect, Grey. You'll never offend a lady's affections by a vile meerschaum, while I—it would be a hard pipe, I think, between a pipe and a wife."

"I'll tell that on you, sir!" said Fannie, with a threatening nod, as Herbert went off. "A pipe and a wife, indeed! Was there ever such an odious comparison?"

Fannie, lightly. "You're just the man to marry, and I really think you'll make a model husband, Laurence."

"Do you?" he asked, in a low tone. "Oh because—because you're so quiet and steady, and thoughtful. I know you'd never worry your wife by being selfish, and cross, and cranky, like some men do. Dear me!" Fannie shook her head as the weighty subject struck her in its full force—"I declare, I don't see how some women put up with their husbands at all."

"Perhaps they love them," suggested Laurence. "Love teaches patience, you know."

"It wouldn't teach me patience," answered Fannie, giving her sailor hat an aggressive little twitch. "I couldn't put up with a cross, cranky, worrying man—not if I loved him to distraction."

"But if you loved him, he would not seem cross, cranky and worrying," answered Laurence, with his quiet smile. "I'd have eyes and ears," said Fannie, quite indignantly. "I could see and hear what he did and what he said. Love would never make me blind."

"I think it would," answered Laurence, looking tenderly at the sweet young face that was so fresh and childlike in its innocence. "Love makes all of us—the wisest and most far-seeing—blind as well as deaf. We will not see—we will not hear."

"You seem to know all about it. Do you speak from experience?" asked Fannie, archly.

"Yes," was the reply, in a low tone that made Fannie repeat of her thoughtless question. "I do speak from experience. Would you like to hear my love story, Fannie?"

"Oh, dear, no! That is, I didn't mean—"

She stopped, blushing and embarrassed—she who could support Fenton's dining compliments with such smiling equanimity, who could laugh at Fenton's most ardent vows.

"I know that you didn't mean to ask my confidence," he answered, sadly; "nevertheless, I give it to you freely. I do love, I have loved for years, one so bright, so gay, so beautiful, that it would be folly to ask her to step from her own sunny sphere and share my humble lot."

"Why, you are not poor, Laurence," she said, moved by a sweet, womanly sympathy at the brave, pathetic resignation of his tone. "Your father is quite well off, I thought."

"Aye, well off," was his answer. "But only while he lives will I profit by his assistance. My education is all I ever will accept from my father. I am a man, and able to work for myself. All that my father has he, by my own request, will leave to my sister, for women are weak, and should be independent of a world that yields success only to the strong. I have my own battle to win, my own way to work. I can do it and I will."

"And won't she?" Fannie looked up into the handsome face of the man beside her with earnest, friendly interest—"won't, the lady wait for you, Laurence? It is so good and generous of you to feel this way toward Marian. I think she—the young lady, I mean—would surely love you better for it."

"Love me better?" he echoed, bitterly. "She does not love me at all. I am nothing—noting to her."

"You don't know," said Fannie, encouragingly. "I am sure if she knew what a fine fellow you are she couldn't help loving you a little, Laurence."

"A little—only a little; that is all I ask," he answered, eagerly. "If she would only love me a little."

"Girls are so queer, you know," said the pretty little mentor, confidentially. "You don't understand her, perhaps, Laurence. Perhaps you're too—too modest and retiring. You mustn't be afraid of her. Just speak right out, and tell her that you love her with all your heart, and that you will work for her, and win her, if she will wait long enough for you; and then—then, even if she says no at first, don't take it, for you know, Laurence, contradicted the little traitress to her sex, 'girls always say no at first, even if they're dying to say yes.'"

"Fannie! Fannie!"—the girl started like a frightened fawn at the new tenderness in her companion's voice, the new light in his eye—"are you only reddening me by your words, or are you, indeed, blind, blind to the love that has worshipped you since you were a laughing, bright-eyed child, the sunbeam of the gladness, the beauty of my life, even then—even then? And now—now I take you at your word! I come to you with my future, of struggle, privation, yet of final—aye, speedy—success, I say to you, my darling, my darling, I love you with all my strength, the fervor, the endurance of a heart that has loved but once, and can never love again. I love you! Can you love me a little, Fannie—only a very little?"

"I—I—" Fannie shrank back, and covered her face with her hands. "Not me, Laurence! Oh, you didn't mean me? Oh, I am so sorry—so very sorry! I didn't know—I didn't think! I like you so much, Laurence. I—I respect you so much."

that love was blind. I ought to have seen—I ought to have known better. Let us be friends, once more, Fannie—only friends—and think of me as you think of Herbert."

"What the deuce was the matter with Laurence to-night, Fan?" asked her brother, as they wended their way homeward through the woods from the river. "The fellow didn't seem himself at all. What were you and he talking about so long?"

"Oh, dear! you won't be angry, Herbert?" said Fannie, clasping his arm and looking up into his face in her own pretty, winning way. "But—what do you think? He actually—actually proposed to me, dear—Laurence Grey! I never dreamed of such a thing!"

"Proposed to you, eh, Puss? And what did you tell him—yes?" asked Herbert, smiling.

"Yes?" asked Fannie, in astonishment—"did I tell Laurence Grey yes? Why, of course not, brother! I would as soon think of marrying you!"

"Pshaw, Fan!" said her brother, in a vexed tone. "You don't know what you are saying. I believe, when it comes to choosing a husband, every woman turns a fool. You're blind, Fan—blind, blind!"

CHAPTER XIV.  
A CHILDRINE CONFIDENCE.

Fannie went straight to Sybil's room on her return home.

It was midnight, and the old chamber of Basil Clive was flooded with the light of the midsummer moon; and, invalid as she still was, Sybil sat dressed, by one of the diamond-paned windows, that looked out upon forest, river and valley—the wide-reaching domain that Robert Clive called his own.

"The sweet face that turned toward Fannie, on her entrance, seemed paler and sadder than usual. Perhaps Sybil had been weighing all these proud possessions against the woman's kingdom in which she could never reign—the kingdom of the heart."

"Did you have a pleasant time, dear?" she asked, as Fannie knelt beside, and twined her arms around her waist. "What! surely!"—Sybil took a closer view of the pretty countenance—"Why, Fannie, you have been crying! What is the matter? Has anything happened?" she said, nervously.

"Yes," answered Fannie, bursting into a fit of childish tears, "something has happened; and—and I am so miserable and wretched, Sybil, I don't know what to do! Herbert is—"

"What! something happened?" cried Sybil, started to her feet, "to Herbert—your brother? Oh, where is he? Let me see him! Where is he?"

"He is downstairs, I suppose. I don't mean anything has happened to him. I was only going to say—that—that he is as mad as fire because—because—"

Fannie broke down again, sobbing, too wretched to notice her friend's momentary betrayal of herself.

"What is the matter?" asked Sybil, in a voice that tenderness could tone into the softest music. "How have you offended your brother, dear? Why is he angry with you?"

"Because—because—I am sure I couldn't help it, and never dreamed of such a thing. I never flirted with him a bit. He was so poky—so good, I mean—and I'd as soon think of marrying my grandfather!" concluded Fannie, emphatically.

"Marrying your grandfather? What are you talking about, dear?" asked Sybil, in natural bewilderment.

"Why, Laurence Grey, of course," answered Fannie petulantly. "He had to go and fall in love with me—with me!" repeated Fannie, as if it were the most surprising thing in the world. "And I feel so horrible and mean, and wretched about it; and Herbert is cross because I won't have him, and says I'm as a little fool!"

"Is that all?" asked Sybil, smiling, with a long breath of infinite relief. "I thought that something far more serious had caused the grief. You have given Mr. Grey his answer, and I should think that would be the end of it—that is, if—" Sybil's hand threaded the beautiful hair caressingly—"if you are quite sure of your heart."

"Sure of my own heart?" repeated Fannie, wonderingly.

Sybil smiled again. "I mean, are you quite sure that you do not care a little for Mr. Grey? I thought him a very noble young man, Fannie. He has so much dignity, so much modesty, and so much talent."

ing, thoughtless girl of the dangers that surrounded her happy home? How could she speak without compromising her father's safety, her father's and Elizabeth's—those two desperate, maddened beings, leagued together against the innocent and unconscious children of Robert Clive?"

"I don't think it is very safe to walk in these woods alone," Sybil added. "I have heard that some—some—lawless characters have been seen near here. It is well to be careful, Fannie."

"Oh, dear, I'm not afraid," answered the young heiress, laughing. "Everybody knows papa, and almost everybody fears him. Wherever else they may go, you may be sure the 'lawless characters' will keep clear of the Clive place. Papa is a regular bugbear to all the thieves and tramps in the neighborhood."

"But—but—oh, how hard it was to speak with Fannie's arm about her waist, with Fannie's breath upon her cheek—"there might be some danger and desperate enough to defy even your father!"—I heard of—a man once—a man driven to desperation by a woman or fancied wrong—who for years and years haunted his enemy's grounds, cast his shadow upon the threshold; nay, even—Sybil's voice sank to a thrilling whisper—"found a secret entrance to the very house. And all the time this enemy, proud and powerful as your father, was unconscious of the danger that threatened him, and even more darkly threatened his. For he had children, Fannie—noble, beautiful children—and upon them had descended the legacy of hate and revenge. It was on these children this man had sworn to visit the father's crime: it was the children who were doomed to—"

"—to—Oh, heaven!"

Sybil stopped, shuddering all over; for the door had opened noiselessly, and the black-robed figure of Mrs. Wyllis stood, a listener, upon the threshold.

"Miss Fannie," she purred softly, as the two young people started at sight of her, "your lamp has burned so long that I fear it is dangerous. If you have no objection, I will leave a candle in its place. There have been so many dreadful accidents of late that one cannot be too careful—her sleepy eyes took one of their quick, stealthy surveys of the room—"one cannot be too careful."

"Oh, dear, what a poky old thing you are, Wyllis!" said Fannie, petulantly. "I know you mean it is time we were in bed, so, why don't you go to bed?"

"Good-night, Sybil. I won't walk in the woods alone any more, for your story has fairly made my flesh creep."

As she retired to her own room, the young lady asked:

"I wonder if papa has any enemies, Wyllis?"

"I suppose he has, Miss Fannie," was the quiet rejoinder. "There are few men like him who haven't."

"Do you suppose that he—that my papa—could ever have done any one harm?" asked Fannie, indignantly.

"Of course not," answered the housekeeper, softly. "Only, my dear, as you will live to learn, envy and jealousy make the worst kind of enemies. It does not need harm. But why do you ask?"

"Oh, for no reason in particular," answered Fannie, evasively. "Only—only"—as the young lady continued to her own room, she glanced into the mirror, a few minutes later—"Sybil did talk so very queer. It sounded—it really sounded as if she were telling that story about papa."

"Has he an enemy?" repeated Mrs. Wyllis, softly to herself, as she stole noiselessly along the carpeted hall, and paused for a moment to listen at Sybil's door—"has he an enemy? Aye!"—and her face lit up with a crafty smile of triumph that no mortal eye had ever seen upon its placid features—"he has one at his threshold, at his fireside—aye, at his very meal! An enemy that will not falter until she gains her end!"

CHAPTER XV.  
Miss Marian Investigates.

Feminine curiosity was perhaps the least objectionable of Miss Marian Grey's distinguishing characteristics, but feminine curiosity she certainly possessed to a remarkable degree.

She had been in a fever of excitement since the night when the strange visitor came to her father's study, and her natural curiosity, stimulated by a morbid woman's pique against the man who defied her charms, deprived her of peace and rest.

That she was some dreadful skeleton closeted at Clive Towers she had little doubt; but how could she bring that skeleton to light?—how discover the awful secret this proud family had so effectually concealed for so many years? For not even the malicious gossip of a country neighborhood, where any shaft against the lord of the manor would have been feathered by a hundred eager tongues, had not as yet touched the calm dignity of Robert Clive.

He had always been honored, respected—a little feared, perhaps—but not loved.

Several attempts that Miss Marian made to sound her father, having proved ineffectual—the old lawyer being as impenetrable as one of the iron safes that contained his legal documents—the worthy daughter of Mother Eye arrayed herself one morning in a becoming walking-garb and started out on a tour of investigation.

sheet of silver; here and there an opening the woods displayed some handsome village or picturesque cottage crowning a verdant hillside or nestling in some sheltered vale.

It was to one of these cottages Miss Marian bent her steps—a very little bird's-nest of a place, embowered in vines and roses, until nothing but an adventurous chimney and a very determined gable remained visible to assert the human proprietorship of the place.

Here lived an ancient spinster named Miss Melicia Fenix, who was so learned in the legendary lore of the neighborhood that her authority on all matters pertaining to aristocratic precedence was beyond dispute. She had the most uncomfortable recollections of everybody's grandfather and the most decisive opinion of everybody's grandmother. Ancestral squabbles and ancestral sprees were equally fresh in this alarming memory. She knew whose great-aunt had taken in washing, and whose great-uncle had cobbed shoes.

There had been a little coolness between Miss Fenix and the Greys since the estimable Felicia had mentioned to a friend her reminiscences concerning one of the Grey's grandfathers, which were not very agreeable to their descendants; but, as Miss Marian decided that morning, it was very foolish to allow so trifling a matter to estrange her from a valuable friend. Perhaps her grandfather had been a little uncertain in his business matters—perhaps he had taken money under false pretenses. Miss Marian's secret regret was that she had not taken a little more.

At any rate, Miss Fenix's opinions and recollections were necessary to Miss Marian just now. If any one could let her into the secret trouble of the Clives, it was this maiden of terrible memory, this (as Herbert called her) pickle jar of the past.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

His Denomination.

W. F. Cody had in one of his companies a Westerner, "Broncho Bill." A certain missionary had joined the aggregation to look after the morals of the Indians. Thinking that Broncho Bill would bear a little looking after also, the good man secured a seat by his side at the dinner table and remarked pleasantly:

"This is Mr. Broncho Bill, is it not?"

"Yas."

"Where were you born?"

"Near Kit Bullard's mill on Big Pigeon."

"Religious parents, I suppose?"

"Yas."

"What is your denomination?"

"My what?"

"O—oh—yas. Smith and Wesson."

Philadelphia Inquirer.

Didn't Seem Possible.

A Scottish paper tells an anecdote in connection with a new electric system, just opened in Aberdeen. Two farm servants came to Aberdeen to spend New Year's Day. Arriving by train, they immediately made their way to the terminus of the electric tramway circuit, where, after looking at the new creation with much wonder, they decided upon having a ride. Getting on top of the car, and after getting well along George street, "Wull," said man Jack, "this is a grand invention. In Edingburgh I saw them drive the cars w' an iron rope aneth' street, in Dundee they pu' them w' an engine, but, mighty man, who wad a' thocht they could cu' them w' a fishing rod!"

Another Idol Shattered.

She was a kindly-faced woman, and it was easy to see that she was bubbling over with love for the little folk. She walked modestly over into the office of the city editor and inquired:

"A Matter of Headway.

"She is so interested in higher education," said the young woman.

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne. "A mortar board is very becoming to her style of beauty, and she knows it."—Washington Star.

British Aristocracy Blamed.

Many people attribute their recent reverses to degeneracy. The life of luxury does not produce vigor. Indigestible suppers, constant nerve strain and lack of exercise upset the stomach. The blood that makes heroes must come from healthy stomachs. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters purifies the blood and strengthens the stomach. It cures constipation, indigestion and dyspepsia.

More Information.

Tommy—Say, paw.

Mr. Flagg—Well?

"What is a millinery opening?"

"It is a hole. It occurs in my bank account every spring."—Indianapolis Press.

That Tired Feeling

Just as surely indicates that the blood is lacking in vitality and the elements of health as does the most obstinate humor that the vital fluid is full of impurities. Hood's Sarsaparilla cures that tired feeling by enriching and vitalizing the blood, creating a good appetite and invigorating every organ of the body.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

"I had that tired feeling all the time. Was as tired in the morning when I rose as I was when I went to bed. I took four bottles of Hood's Sarsaparilla and it made me feel like a new man. I could work hard and not feel tired. I recommend Hood's to all who need a good medicine." A. P. CHARTER, Creston, Iowa.

Hood's Sarsaparilla is sold by all druggists. Get Hood's and only Hood's.

Two Kitchener Stories.

What Lord Kitchener is doing may be best summed up in two stories that are going the rounds in regard to him. It is said that he was asked the other day whether he did not propose to reorganize the transport. His reply was: "No; I am going to organize it." The other story is that he paid a surprise visit to the principal hotel in the city, the resort of all those among the officers who can, while in Cape Town, afford the luxuries of life at the Mount Nelson. He called for the visitors' book, and carefully ran his finger down the list of military guests. He subsequently inquired of each officer his reason for being at the Mount Nelson hotel and not at the front. In most cases, of course, there were excellent reasons for the presence of those gentlemen in Cape Town. In some, however, the reasons were not so good—were not, in fact, satisfactory, and in one or two cases the leave was immediately canceled and the laggard soldiers sent to their regiment.—London News.

Send for "Choice Recipes."

by Walter Bate & Co. Ltd., Dorchester, Mass., mailed free. Mention this paper.

Mine Rats in Colorado.

Mountain rats in the mines in Colorado are about as big as a wharf rat, but they have a bushy tail like a squirrel and are pets of the miners. He who over the luncheon hour comes you will see them come from their holes, or nests, or wherever they live in the intervals between meals, squat on their haunches and sit there until one of the miners shares his dinner with them. Whatever they get of the scraps of that meal they sit up and eat just as a squirrel does. The miner doesn't exist that would not share his meal with them.—Indianapolis News.

Why?

Ragged Robbins—Dis tramp-joke writer is our best friend.

Waggy Walker—How's dat?

Ragged Robbins—W'y he's conderably givin' us new gags ter work.

Waggy Walker—Dat's so. I wonder w'y such a gifted feller ever left de perfect ter work.

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There is a strong resemblance between the onion and the leek.

The living skeleton in the museum finds that his loss is his gain.

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ALABASTINE

Should not be confused with kalsomine, as it is entirely different from all the various kalsomines on the market, being durable and not stuck on the wall with glue. Alabastine customers should avoid getting cheap kalsomines under different names, by insisting on having the goods in packages properly labeled. They should reject all imitations. There is nothing "just as good."

ALABASTINE

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