

A Pair of Jacks.

By Lulu Cameron

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

"Look, grandpa, at my lovely yellow," said Mary, showing him a really beautiful wild flower.

"It is very fine, my dear. Where did you get it?"

"Have you been three miles this morning? I thought."

"I did not say I had gotten it this morning, grandpa," was her rather lame explanation.

"No; I thought you had not had your ride. Told me last night that he had forgotten your saddle. The poor old fellow was really distressed about it."

"He need not have felt so bad," rejoined Mary, looking up to find Jack's eyes upon her. Something in her glace was a revelation to her. The hot blood mounted to her brow, and an overwhelming sense of shame swept over her. In the first bitter rush of this feeling, she left the table precipitately.

"Grandpa, I'm not hungry, and not well. Please excuse me."

These declarations, delivered in decidedly jerky tones, caused Mr. Millard to glance up in some surprise.

"Not well?" he repeated, fixing his eyes upon her face; "my dearest, you make me anxious."

"So like you, grandpa, to be anxious for nothing. Upon reflection, I feel wonderfully well, and have a very great appetite." With which assertion the contradictory Mary returned to her place and revelled in the highest spirits during the rest of the meal. Only occasionally, when by some chance she encountered Jack's glances, she colored wanly, and dropped her eyes in painful embarrassment. Her grandfather watched her gravely.

"I fear Mary is somewhat feverish," he observed, with much anxiety, to Jeannette, after breakfast; "the child is always so well that her slightest indisposition alarms me."

The gentleman appeared unconvinced, but he said no more upon the subject.

Meanwhile, the object of this mingled blame and solicitude was crouched in the depths of her grandfather's chair. Hearing Jack's step she snatched upon the book closest at hand, and, without seeing a word before her, pretended to read.

"Is it interesting?" he asked, crossing the room with the air of one not quite certain of his reception.

Mary made no answer, and Jack approaching more closely, read the title over her shoulders. "So you read Homer in the original?" he said, very quietly.

Closing her book with a snap, she turned upon him: "I want to ask you a question," she said in a voice of suppressed anger. "Not Greek, but plain English, and I wish you plain answer. What did you mean by the look you gave me at breakfast? No evasion please. You know I took a ride this morning?" An inclination of his head gave an almost imperceptible assent to her question. She understood it, however.

"You know," she repeated, biting her lips fiercely. "How did you know? Did you—see me?" She brought out her words with difficulty, and again Jack assented.

"Where?" started again on the way?" "On the way, since you will know the truth."

Her eyes fell, and once more the hot color burned in her cheeks.

"Thank you, Mr. Beverly," she cried, starting up with a passionate gesture, "I have another remark to make. It is plain English, too. I hate you."

"Don't go," he pleaded, as she tried to pass him. "You forced me to tell you. You really did. I'm awfully sorry."

"Sorry for what?" "Why, for being there, and—seeing you," he returned, taken at a slight disadvantage.

"Sorry for being there and seeing me," she repeated in a voice suspiciously near tears, and with her face persistently lowered. "What a kindly way to put it. To spare my feelings, I suppose. Don't try. I have none to spare. I like unnatural acts. I take to them quite naturally. I'm not ready to have lessons in deportment from you, and I wish to see you again when I can't be meeting you at every corner."

"I will, by all means," he responded as she concluded her half-choked utterances. "I don't believe you mean a word of what you have said, though, and I know it."

At this point Jack found himself addressing empty air. Mary had departed and for the rest of the morning remained invisible.

At dinner time she insisted on remaining in her room, claiming a headache as an excuse, but when her grandfather, considerably worried, came to inquire for himself, she told him she had never felt better, insisting, notwithstanding, on having dinner in her room.

Jeannette thought this a most reprehensible exhibition of self-will, and expressed her views quite strongly to the butler.

"And your grandpa worried nearly out of his wits," she concluded, "and wanting to send for a doctor."

"Why will grandpa be so foolish?" said Mary in a slightly vexed tone. "I hope you won't let him do it, Jeannette."

"Of course I won't. You need a shake-up much more than you do a doctor, my dear. And I'm thinking you're better."

At supper Mary duly appeared, arrayed in a dress Jack had taken pains to say he disliked. Neither she nor Jack was especially talkative, and her grandfather, who was quite unobservant, was forced to keep up the somewhat flagging conversation.

The evening was cool, they went immediately to the parlor, where Mary, in an unusual fit of industry, got out some crocheting and began working on it, as though her very life depended upon what she accomplished.

"My dear," said Mr. Millard, breaking the rather heavy silence, "Jack is thinking of leaving us. You must help me to persuade him to prolong his visit."

"Don't you think we should consider Mr. Beverly, grandpa? Think how long he has been bored by us already and spare him further infliction."

Jack bit his lips, and turning from the window, where his fingers had been playing an idle tattoo, he addressed himself to Mr. Millard.

"I have already imposed too long on your kind hospitality. My visit has been

so thoroughly enjoyable that I cut it short with regret, and if any one has been bored, Miss Mary has been the sufferer, I fear."

His glance sought the brown eyes, bending over the woman, but Mary's work was evidently all-absorbing.

"We will not discuss your departure any further to-night," responded Mr. Millard, slightly pained at his granddaughter's manner. "To-morrow, I hope, will find you willing to give us at least a few days more of your company. I believe neither Mary nor myself is quite willing to let you go. Mary, why will you spoil your eyes over that work? Put it aside, my dear, and give us some music. Jack has never heard you sing."

"And he never will, grandpa. You know perfectly well that I don't pretend to sing, and that I never, under any circumstances, sing for any one but you."

"Nonsense, my dear; you have an excellent natural voice. Jack will agree with me, I am sure, if you will give him an opportunity to judge. I fear he may think you have no accomplishments."

"He knows better," she answered, with slightly darkening eyes. "He knows I can swim, and row, and ride"—she half paused after naming this last accomplishment, and, giving Jack a decidedly defiant glance, added, calmly—"two ways."

The next second she caught her grandfather's eyes fixed upon her in perplexed surprise, and with a remorseless air and a painful blush, she said, redly penitently:

"What you look at me in that way I feel like a savage. I am a savage, anyway, and many of others would be, too, if they dared. I hate people who won't do things simply because the world condemns them. They are nothing but hypocrites. They'd break a commandment of God sooner than commit a breach of etiquette. They are bound this way, and many of them would be, too, if they dared. I hate people who won't do things simply because the world condemns them. They are nothing but hypocrites. They'd break a commandment of God sooner than commit a breach of etiquette. They are bound this way, and many of them would be, too, if they dared. I hate people who won't do things simply because the world condemns them. They are nothing but hypocrites. They'd break a commandment of God sooner than commit a breach of etiquette. They are bound this way, and many of them would be, too, if they dared. I hate people who won't do things simply because the world condemns them. They are nothing but hypocrites. 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