

## A CROWN OF FAITH

### CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)

In about an hour Lionel Leigh entered the room. The young men had never exchanged words before. Lionel bowed. Arthur pointed to a seat.

"Mr. Leigh, I have been excessively annoyed that you should have been subject to distress on the night when some miscreant tried to murder me. I am sorry, in one sense, that you allowed yourself to be mixed up in an intimacy with my poor, hair-brained brother Dick. I suppose he made himself agreeable?"

"Well, Mr. Calthorpe, your brother is too reckless, and loves trifles and pleasure too much, to be quite fascinating as a companion to me at all times. He is certainly amusing and dashing; but I pitied him. It seemed horrible to be the nephew of a nobleman, and the twin brother of an earl's heir, and to be banished from home, and living on his wits at an inn, borrowing, and running into debt. I wished the earl to pardon him, and allow him a regular income, and insist on his keeping within bounds."

"He would never do it," said Arthur Calthorpe. "He told me himself that the hundred and fifty half-yearly payment always goes in a week; and he said he never paid his debts, either, if he could help it."

"He has told me the same," said Lionel gloomily.

"Well, then, I am sorry you allowed your name to be mixed up with poor Dick's. I thought you might have suffered some annoyance. I know Dick wouldn't care; he is off in Ireland now; and the next move he makes will be to France. He knows that I believe he would not think of braining me, and he understands that the earl will never forgive him—the earl never does forgive; so I send him three hundred a year. But you, Mr. Leigh—you are sure you have not been snubbed, in consequence?"

"Not at all, sir. I think, on the whole, the Abbotsford people are aware that I am not an assassin in disguise; and I have not lost my pupils at St. Martha's, even."

"Your sister is there, isn't she?"

"Yes," replied Lionel dryly.

"We Calthorpes are given to making love matches—Dick excepted. He is a cold-hearted savage in all affairs of the affections—would marry a broker's widow if she had seven thousand a year, if she were short, stout, red faced, and fifty; but for me, Mr. Leigh, I am sincere; I hope and pray that some day your sister may be Countess of Beryl. What family of Leighs do you belong to?"

"Mr. Calthorpe, my father was a Republican—what they call here a Radical. I know he was a scholar and a gentleman."

"But there is breed about her," said the young aristocrat, moving his foot restlessly. "Have you nothing which speaks of ancient family honors?"

"Oh, yes; Leila has a gold cross, with a portrait of our mother in the center."

"What would I give to see it? Bring it to me."

"But, sir, although you speak honorably—most honorably—there is the earl."

"He is seventy-nine. I would wait ten years for Miss Leigh."

"Then, Ella Watson?"

"Why, it was a lark—a bit of schoolboy nonsense. Listen to me, and judge for yourself. I, with two college friends, Everson and Sir George Power, was fishing in the Highlands; and one week it rained, and rained, and rained, and we had nothing to amuse us, and we went into the town of Euvanon, and ate short bread, in the baker's shop, which was also the postoffice, and made love, all three of us, to this long-faced girl, who stood behind the counter."

"Made love?" Lionel asked dubiously.

"Well, yes; talked all sorts of trash to her, all of us; and we invited her to supper at St. Swithin's Inn; and she came; and this Ellen, having seen an envelope addressed to me, called herself Mrs. Arthur Calthorpe, and I said nothing against it. After that, she wrote me a letter, asked for two thousand for her father, who is an unmitigated scamp, and had the insolence to inform me that she was my legal wife, and that it was her intention to announce that fact to an admiring world. I was stupefied enough to beg her silence, whereas an open contest would have been the best thing for me; but I feared the earl. I knew his obstinacy."

"And now, Mr. Calthorpe, what do you propose doing?"

"According to strict law, and this atrocious Scotch code, which has never been altered, I suppose that my madcap prints have placed me in this woman's power. Anyhow, there will be a lawsuit and trial. There is no doubt about that; but, meanwhile, I have made up mind there is only one woman in the world whom I can ever love; and that woman is your sister, Mr. Leigh."

### CHAPTER XII.

Lionel Leigh loved Ella Wycherly. Notwithstanding the strenuous effort made by Miss Worthington to banish him from Wycherly, it fell out that he was not forbidden to teach German to the colonel's daughter; and during the three months which followed the ball he had given his three weekly lessons.

He would tell her that, though tutor, and she heiress, he was still man, and she woman; that he had dared to love her boldly, if without hope. Half in rage, and half in triumphant pride, he had vowed that the confession should be made. She should learn of Chateau Moreauville, and the possible title and estates which had escaped him.

Sometimes it seemed to Lionel that he hated Ella Wycherly more than he loved her. Now he was asked for sympathy and help for another lover; but what a lover!—an earl's heir, a spoiled world's darling. No; this pampered aristocrat could not love as he loved. At last he said:

"Mr. Calthorpe, you will change your mind. When you are free of Nellie Watson, you will not wish to marry a governess."

"But I declare it!" cried Arthur, flushing—"I declare it, sir, to you, her broth-

er, on my honor as a man and a gentleman! Can I say more?"

"No, Mr. Calthorpe; you are sincere. I will speak to my sister. But what about Nellie Watson?"

"You know, of course, she is out of prison, and all chance of discovering who it was that tried to murder me seems lost. It was certainly not Nellie, nor her father. It was proved beyond doubt that old Watson was in the postoffice at Euvanon, in Scotland, on the night of the seventh. Nellie herself says she should know the man if she saw him; but refuses, with a smile, to describe him. There is something more in this affair, Mr. Leigh, than any of us dream of. Dick, my brother, is quite incapable of such a crime; it was not his figure which I saw flying away and leaping the palings before I fainted, after the blow. But let us talk of other things. Will you take that brooch and bracelet to your sister, with my devoted love? They are not diamonds or rubies, only gold, set with pearls and pale-pink topaz—a design I chose myself."

Then he remembered, with some pain, that Miss Wycherly had greeted him mockingly, that she had told him the news concerned him and his velvet coat was something infinitely less agreeable than her own marriage, that all the Wycherly world were talking of it. He looked on the ground. Then he said:

"Dr. Dundas, I shall be delighted to become an inmate of Wycherly. But, my other pupils?"

"Give them a fortnight's notice," said the doctor briskly. "A fortnight is long enough."

"A month," pleaded Lionel. "It would take a month for Miss Pritchard to engage another professor."

"A month, then a month. So you will come in March, and train th' boy, and make him walk in the road he should walk in?"

"I will, Dr. Dundas."

"You will dine with us," pursued the doctor, "and spend the evening, if you like. But our evenings are usually dull; whilst for us elders, and silence or a conversation with the cat for poor Miss Wycherly." The good doctor shrugged his shoulders. "Old friendship with the colonel in India years, years ago ties me here." He shook his head, and frowned. "Madam is a peculiarity, as you will find—a saint, a tyrant, all in one!"

"A thorough woman of the world," said Lionel.

The laugh of the Scotch doctor rang loudly through the bare February wood.

"The world!" he echoed. "Oh, poor lady! How amusing are the comments of outsiders! No, young sir; the mistress of Wycherly is not a woman of the world."

"At least she is proud!"

"Proud; yes, as Lucifer. One might say she had fallen from some higher sphere, and disdained converse with mortals."

"They do not receive much company?" asked Lionel.

"Occasionally. There will be a dinner next month, and the boy heir introduced to the county. Well, here I must leave you, for I have a message to the woodman. It is a bargain, then?"

"Yes, sir."

And so they parted.

(To be continued.)

He Was WIlling.

In the morning mail the busy editor found the following letter written on a postal card: "Dear Sir: I have just graduated from a correspondence school of journalism. Would you like to have me write for your paper? J. Alexander McNutt."

Seizing his trusty pencil, the busy editor dashed off the following in reply: "Dear J. Alex: Certainly we would be pleased to have you write for our paper. Kindly address your letter to the circulation manager and inclose to the regular subscription price."

Was she offended? Had her haughtiness taken offense? He walked on almost sullenly toward the Hall. Turning round a huge withered trunk of an oak, which obstructed the path, he encountered a tall, sinewy figure—a man in a gray suit, with a blue velvet cap pulled low over his forehead. His shaggy light eyebrows met in puzzled frown. Suddenly he raised his deep-set eyes, and they flashed kindly recognition on the German tutor.

"Hello! Mr. Leigh. The top of the morning to you. I was looking for you. I have a proposal to make to you." Dr. Dundas came and linked his arm in that of Lionel. "Walk back with me. You are not in a hurry, are you?"

"Oh," replied the society man, "talk to her about her beauty."

"But suppose she hasn't any?" said the youth.

"In that case, rejoined the s. m. "talk to her about the ugliness of the other girls present."

His Case.

"Do you really believe that living expenses have increased 20 per cent in the last five years?"

"Marryat—What! Why, they've increased 100 per cent at least."

"Ah! well; she can wait. I have a proposal to make to you. Should you like to come and reside at Wycherly Hall?"

Lionel's heart gave a great bound, then thumped madly against his side. He was afraid that the doctor would notice his emotion.

"You take me by surprise," he said.

"Of course I do; but there is nothing to be alarmed at. The facts are simply these: Colonel Wycherly has no male heir, and there is a vast property attached to Wycherly—more than Miss Wycherly can have need of, and, under ordinary circumstances, she might become the prey of fortune hunters. That young lady is headstrong—very headstrong."

He paused a moment, and glanced very keenly at Lionel, with the deep-set, keen, sarcastic eyes.

"We will guard her from all enterprisers; but the colonel has come to the wise decision that ninety thousand a year is a preposterous fortune for a girl. She, thus, might marry a duke; but Mrs. Wycherly is a very peculiar person; and so, in fact, twenty thousand a year is to be Ella's portion, with her mother as guardian. Estates to the value of seventy thousand, including Wycherly, are to descend by will to one Graves Power, a seventh or eighth cousin of the colonel. We have had some trouble to raise this gentleman up; but he is found at length. He is coming to reside at Wycherly, with his mother's full consent, his mother being a widow."

"And he is to marry Miss Wycherly?"

"Indeed, no. He is a boy of nine, and

I wish you to be his tutor. The boy is delicate. He has been at a large public school, is industrious, and has overworked; and I want to give him twelve months' fishing, and shooting, and riding, under the care of an intelligent tutor, who won't let him carry his gun dangerously, nor swim, after a full meal, nor sit with his feet in the stream, and a blazing July sun on his head. I want you to teach him English and grammar and spelling and French and German, which have all been neglected at his great public school; and then he will be a young, merry companion for Ella. Poor child! she needs a romp sorely; and if you come, Mr. Leigh, the colonel will make it worth your while. Two hundred a year, a sitting room and bedroom to yourself; and when the boy goes to Eton, you can accompany him as private tutor. I have heard it hinted that you are anxious to distinguish yourself in literary circles. You will have ample time to pursue your studies. Now, will you accept the position?"

To Lionel it was as if the gates of an enchanted palace had opened wide, and he had been invited to enter.

Ella—Ella—Ella! Would he listen daily to the music of her voice, and in time—who could say may?—win her to something like pity, something like feeling, something like appreciation of his deep devotion—his intense love?

Then he remembered, with some pain, that Miss Wycherly had greeted him mockingly, that she had told him the news concerned him and his velvet coat was something infinitely less agreeable than her own marriage, that all the Wycherly world were talking of it. He looked on the ground. Then he said:

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