

The VALIANTS of VIRGINIA

By FALIE ERMINIE RIVES (Mrs. POST WHEELER)
ILLUSTRATED BY LAUREN STOUT

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Awakening.

The sun had passed the meridian next day when Vallant awoke, from a sleep as deep as Abou ben Adhem's, yet one crowded with flying tiptoe dreams. The one great fact of Shirley's love had lain at the core of all these honied images, and his mind was full of it as his eyes opened, wide all at once, to the new day.

He looked at his watch and rolled from the bed with a laugh. "Past twelve!" he exclaimed. "Good heavens! What about all the work I had laid out for today?"

Presently he was splashing in the lake, shooting under his curved hand unerring jets of water at Chum, who danced about the rim barking, now venturing to wet a valourous paw, now scrambling up the bank to escape the watery javelins.

Vallant came up the terraces with his blood bounding to a new rapture. Crossing the garden, he ran quickly to the little close which held the sundial and pulled a single great passion-flower. He stood a moment holding it to his face, his nostrils catching its faint elusive perfume. Only last night, under the moon, he had stood there with Shirley in his arms. A gush of the unbelievable sweetness of that moment poured over him. His face softened.

Standing with his sandaled feet deep in the white blossoms, the sun on his damp hair and the loose robe clinging to his moist limbs, he gave himself to a sudden day-dream. A wonderful waking dream of joy overflowing years of ambitionless ease; of the Damory Court that should be in days to come.

When he came from the little close there was a new mystery in the sunshine, a fresh and joyous meaning in the intense blue overarching of the imponderable sky. Every bird-note held its own love-secret. A wood-thrush sang it from a silver birch beside the summer-house, and a bob-white whistled it in the little valley beyond. Even the long trip-hammer of a far-away woodpecker beat a radiant tattoo.

He paused to greet the flaming peacock that sent out a curdling screech, in which the tentative pottercrack! pottercrack! of a guinea-fowl tangled itself softly. "Go on," he invited. "Explode all you want to, old Fire-Cracker! Hang your purple-and-gold pessimism! You only make the birds sound sweeter. Perhaps that's what you're for—who knows?"

He tried to work, but work was not for that marvelous afternoon. He wandered about the gardens, planning this or that addition: a little longer sweep to the pansy-bed—a clump of bull-rushes at the farther end of the lake. He peered into the stable: a saddle horse stood there now, but there should be more steeds stamping in those stalls one day, good horse-



For an Instant He Stared Unbelievably.

flesh bought with sound walnut timber from the hillside. How he and Shirley would go galloping over those gleaming roads, in that roscate future when she belonged to him!

Uncle Jefferson, from the door of the kitchens, watched him swinging about in the sunshine, whistling the "Indian Serenade."

"Young mars' feel 'way up in de clouds dis day," he said to Aunt Daphne. "He wake up ez glad ez ef he done 'fessed 'ligion las' night. Well, all de folkses cert'n'y 'joyed deyselves. Ol' Mistah Fargo done eat 'bout forty yu dem jumbles. Ah heah him talkin' ter Mars' John. 'Reck'n yo' mus' hab er crackahjack cook down heah,' he say. Hyuh, hyuh!"

"G'way wid yo' blackyardin'!" sniffed Aunt Daphne, delighted. "Don' need ter come aroun' honey-cauffuddin' me!"

"Dat's what he say," insisted Uncle Jefferson; "he did fo' er fac'!"

She drew her hands from the suds and looked at him anxiously. "Jeff'oon, yo' reck'n Mars' John gwine ter fetch dat Yankee 'ooman heah ter Dam'ry Co'ot, ter be ouah married?"

"Humph!" scoffed her spouse. "Dat highfalutin' gal what done swaller de ramrod? No sub-ree-bob-tail! De oldah yo' gits, de mo' foolshah yo'

citations is! 'Don' yo' tek no mo' trouble on yo' back den yo' kin keek off'n yo' heels! She ain' gwine ter run dis place, er ol' Devil-John tuh ovah in he grave!"

Sunset found Vallant sitting in the music-room before the old square piano. In the shadowy chamber the keys of mother-of-pearl gleamed with dull colors under his fingers. He struck at first only broken chords, that became finally the haunting barcarole of "Tales of Hoffmann." It was the air that had drifted across the garden when he had stood with Shirley by the sun-dial, in the moment of their first kiss. Over and over he played it, improvising dreamy variations, till the tender melody seemed the dear ghost of that embrace. At length he went into the library and in the crimsoning light sat down at the desk, and began to write:

"Dear Bluebird of Mine:
"I can't wait any longer to talk to you. Less than a day has passed since we were together, but it might have been eons, if one measured time by heart-beats. What have you been doing and thinking, I wonder? I have spent those eons in the garden, just wandering about, dreaming over those wonderful, wonderful moments by the sun-dial. Ah, dear little wild heart born of the flowers, with the soul of a bird (yet you are woman, too!) that old disk is marking happy hours now for me!"

"How have I deserved this thing that has come to me?—sad bungler that I have been! Sometimes it seems too glad and sweet, and I am suddenly desperately afraid I shall wake to find myself facing another dull morning in that old, useless, empty life of mine. I am very humble, dear, before your love."

"Shall I tell you when it began with me? Not last night—nor the day we planted the ramblers. (Do you know, when your little muddy boot went trampling down the earth about their roots, I wanted to stoop down and kiss it? So dear everything about you was!) Not that evening at Rose-wood, with the arbor fragrance about us. (I think I shall always picture you with roses all about you. Red roses the color of your lips!) No, it was not then that it began—nor that dreadful hour when you fought with me to save my life—nor the morning you sat your horse in the box-rows in that yew-green habit that made your hair look like molten copper. No, it began the first afternoon, when I sat in my motor with your rose in my hand! It has never left me since, by day or by night. And yet there are people in this age of airships and honking highways and typewriters who think love-at-first-sight is as out-of-date as our little grandmothers' hoops rusting in the garret. Ah, sweetheart, I, for one, know better!"

"Suppose I had not come to Virginia—and known you! My heart jumps when I think of it. It makes one believe in fate. Here at the Court I found an old leaf-calendar—it site at my elbow now, just as I came on it. The date it shows is May 14th, and its motto is: 'Every man carries his fate upon a riband about his neck.' I like that."

"That first Sunday at St. Andrew's, I thought of a day—may it be soon!—when you and I might stand before that altar, with your people (my people, too, now) around us, and I shall hear you say: 'I, Shirley, take thee, John—' And to think it is really to come true! Do you remember the text the minister preached from? It was 'But all men perceive that they have riches, and that their faces shine as the faces of angels.' I think I shall go about henceforth with my face shining, so that all men will see that I have riches—your love for me, dear."

"I am so happy I can hardly see the words—or perhaps it is that the sun has set. I am sending this over by Uncle Jefferson. Send me back just a word by him, sweetheart, to say I may come to you tonight. And add the three short words I am so thirsty to hear over and over—no verb between two pronouns—so that I can kiss them all at once!"

He raised his head, a little flushed and with eyes brilliant, lighted a candle, sealed the letter with the ring he wore and dispatched it.

Thereafter he sat looking into the growing dusk, watching the pale lamps of the constellations deepen to green gilt against the lapis-lazuli of the sky, and listening to the insect noises dulling into the woven chorus of evening. Uncle Jefferson was long in returning, and he grew impatient finally and began to prowl through the dusty corridors like a leopard, then to the front porch and finally to the driveway, listening at every turn for the familiar slouching step.

When at length the old negro appeared, Vallant took the note he brought, his heart beating rapidly, and carried it hastily in to the candle-light. He did not open it at once, but sat for a full minute pressing it between his palms as though to extract from the delicate paper the beloved thrill of her touch. His hand shook slightly as he drew the folded leaves from the envelope. How would it begin? "My Knight of the Crimson Rose?" or "Dear Gardener?" (She had called him Gardener the day they had

met out the roses) or perhaps even "Sweetheart?" It would not be long, only a mere "Yes" or "Come to me," perhaps; yet even the shortest missive had its beginning and its ending.

He opened and read. For an instant he stared unbelievably. Then the paper cracked to a ball in his clutched hand, and he made a hoarse sound which was half cry, then sat perfectly still, his whole face shuddering. What he crushed in his hand was no note of tender love-phrases; it was an abrupt dismissal. The staggering contretemps struck the color from his face and left every nerve raw and quivering. To be "nothing to her, as she could be nothing to him?" He felt a ghastly inclination to laugh. Nothing to her!

Presently, his brows frowning heavily, he spread out the crumpled paper and reread it with bitter slowness, weighing each phrase. "Something which she had learned since she last saw him, which lay between them." She had not known it, then, last night, when they had kissed beside the sundial! She had loved him then! What could there be that thrust them irrevocably apart?

Without stopping to think of the darkness or that the friendly doors of the edifice would be closed, he caught up his hat and went swiftly down the drive to the road, along which he plunged breathlessly. The blue star-spangled sky was now streaked with clouds like faded orchids, and the shadows on the uneven ground under his hurried feet made him giddy. Through the din and hurly-burly of his thoughts he was conscious of dimly moving shapes across fences, the sweet breath of cows, and a negro pedestrian who greeted him in passing. He was stricken suddenly with the thought that Shirley was suffering, too. It seemed incredible that he should now be raging along a country road at nightfall to find something that so horribly hurt him both.

It was almost dark—save for the starlight—when he saw the shadow of the square ivy-grown spire rearing stark from its huddle of foliage against the blurred background. He pushed open the gate and went slowly up the worn path toward the great iron-bound and hooded door. Under the larches on either hand the outlines of the gravestones loomed pallidly, and from the bell tower came the faint inquiring cry of a small owl. Vallant stood looking about him. What could he learn here? He read no answer to the riddle. A little to one side of the path something showed snow-like on the ground, and he went toward it. Nearer, he saw that it was a mass of flowers, starting up whitely from the semi-obscurity from within an iron railing. He bent over, suddenly noting the scent; it was cape jessamine.

With the curious sensation of almost prescience plucking at him, he took a box of vestas from his pocket and struck one. It flared up illuminating a flat granite slab in which was cut a name and inscription:

EDWARD SASSOON.
"Forgive us our trespasses."

The silence seemed to crash to earth like a great looking-glass and shiver into a million pieces. The wax dropped from his fingers and in the supervening darkness a numb fright gripped him by the throat. Shirley had laid these there, on the grave of the man his father had killed—the cape jessamine she had wanted that day, for her mother! He understood.

It came to him at last that there was a chill mist groping among the trees and that he was very cold.

He went back along the Red Road stumbingly. Was this to be the end of the dream, which he had fancied would last forever? Could it be that she was not for him? Was it no hoary lie that the sins of the fathers were visited upon the third and fourth generation?

When he re-entered the library the candle was guttering in the burned wings of a night-moth. The place looked all at once gaunt and desolate and despoiled. What could Virginia, what could Damory Court, be to him without her? The wrinkled note lay on the desk and he bent suddenly with a sharp catching breath and kissed it. There welled over him a wave of rebellious longing. The candle spread to a hazy yellow blur. The walls fell away. He stood under the moonlight, with his arms about her, his lips on hers and his heart beating to the sound of the violins behind them.

He laughed—a harsh wild laugh that rang through the gloomy room. Then he threw himself on the couch and buried his face in his hands. He was still lying there when the misty rain-wet dawn came through the shutters.

(Continued Next Week.)

GOGGANS' PLATFORM.

Cross Hill, S. C., July 10, 1914.

Editor The Advertiser:

As I have announced myself a candidate for the House of Representatives of our State Legislature I would thank you to publish my platform briefly stated as follows:

1st. I believe in low taxes fairly levied upon all property for the support of the government, economically administered.

2nd. I believe in the encouragement and protection of the working man, and in the advancement of the farming and agricultural interest and that experimental stations for the benefit of the farmers be conducted in

each county by and under the control of Clemson College.

3rd. I believe in the liberal support of our rural schools and in the maintenance of comfortable school houses for the conveniences of the children.

4th. I believe in building good roads and bridges from the Court House to all outlying parts of our county, and that in places the roads should be re-located and graded.

5th. I believe in obedience to and the enforcement of the law without favoritism or prejudice and that all our people should work together for the common good.

6th. I believe that a member of the legislature should devote a large portion of his time to the study of the conditions of the people and the needs of all classes and work for the good of the whole people.

7th. I favor the two cent passenger rate for all travelers over the rail-roads.

S. H. Goggans.

THIS STORY IS UP TO DATE

Electric Creatures Besiege Ship in Gulf Stream, Sailors Assert on Reaching Port.

Boston.—A remarkable story is told by the crew of the British freighter Rochelle. According to stories by several of the men, the delay was due principally to electric fishes, otherwise known as torpedo fishes, which were attracted by the steel plates of the vessel, and fastened themselves by hundreds against her bottom and sides.

The steamer was in the Gulf Stream, north of Cuba, when she began to slow down. The officers were unable to explain the change in the progress of the craft. Several sailors said they felt a tingling sensation about their feet and finger tips. The steamer was held back strangely. Members of the crew became alarmed. A sailor looked over the side and says it was plastered with strange-looking fishes. They were two or three thick along the port side under water. The starboard side also was covered.

As the Rochelle moved north and got out of the warm waters of the stream the fishes dropped off and the vessel resumed her speed.

A Good Investment.

W. D. Magill, a well known merchant of Whiteland, Wis., bought a stock of Chamberlain's medicine so as to be able to supply them to his customers. After receiving them he was himself taken sick and says that one small bottle of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy was worth more to him than the cost of his entire stock of these medicines. For sale by all dealers.

Build Right When You Build

That means not only right plans, after your own individual idea, it means right lumber.

There is character in lumber the same as in other things. Some of it carries distinctiveness and style just as dress does.

Our sash, doors, blinds, screens, interior finish, newel posts, columns, grilles, mouldings, etc., are manufactured from lumber coming from our own stumpage, sawed in our own saw mills, dressed and treated in our own planing mills and designed by our corps of experts.

We offer you quality, quantity, style and service, all at the right price. Free estimates cheerfully furnished on large and small contracts. Call or mail in your plans.

AUGUSTA LUMBER CO.
AUGUSTA, GA.

Highest Quality Painting

If a High-grade Job of Automobile, Carriage or Buggy Painting is wanted, we can do it. New Paint Show, clean quarters, free of dust.

HIGHEST GRADE PAINTS

And Varnishes put on by an expert painter. We would like for you to see some of our work before having your painting done.

W. B. BRAMLETT'S SONS

GENERAL REPAIRING

FOR SALE!

- (1) The Glenn Place one mile of Greenville and Laurens Road containing 236 acres.
- (2) Creswell Franklin or Knob Place on road from Barksdale to Goodgions Factory containing 78 acres.
- (3) Second Knob Place joining above tract containing 30 acres.
- (4) Permelia Shockley Tract containing 27 acres.
- (5) Nathan Barksdale Tract containing 58 acres.
- (6) Catherine Putnam Home Place containing 19 acres.
- (7) Part of Catherine Putnam Place containing 34 acres.
- (8) The Bill Armstrong Place containing 65 acres.
- (9) The Mitchell Place at Barksdale on Greenville and Laurens Road containing 126 and 1-2 acres.

One concrete store room at Barksdale Station.
House and lot of Anna C. West and known as the C. C. Featherstone Place on West Main Street in city of Laurens.
The A. J. Taylor house and lot on East Main Street.
S. S. Boyd Place on East Main Street.
One house and lot in town of Gray Court.
Thad. Nelson house and lot on West Hampton Street.
Four Hundred acres five miles of Whitmire, known as the Mars Place.
Five Hundred acres one-half miles of Madden Station known as Henry Place.
Two Hundred acres, bounded by lands of T. M. Shaw home-place, known as Motte Place.
Four Hundred acres, bounded by T. M. Shaw home-place and known as Alsie Coleman Place.
Mary C. Sullivan house and lot on Sullivan Street.
Two houses and lots on Laurel Street.

One Hundred Acres three miles South of Laurens for Twenty-five Hundred (\$2,500.00) Dollars.
One Hundred and Forty-six Acres near Trinity Ridge School at a Bargain.
One house and several lots between City of Laurens and Watts Mill.
One Hundred Acres near Ora, Bramlette Place, at Twenty-three Hundred (\$2,300.00) Dollars.
Fifty Acres near City limits at Fifty-five (\$55.00) Dollars per Acre.
Fifty-two Acres in town of Gray Court, good dwelling and barn at Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars.
Have other Farms, Houses and Lots for Sale. See us!

Laurens Trust Company

R. A. COOPER, President. J. S. MACHEN, Sec. and Treas.