The VALIANTS of VIRGINIA

By HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES

ILLUSTRATIONS by LAUREN STOUT

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SYNOPSIS.

John Valiant, a rich society favorite, suddenly discovers that the Valiant ancestral estate, Three Springs, in Virginia, which was left to him, is not a source of wealth, but failed. He reluctantly turns it over to his creditors, and he and his family move to the country. His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a horse and buggy, a cow, a pig, a few hens and a Jersey bull. Tom Dandridge, Dabney court to Miss Virginia Dandridge, his fiancee, and Dabney Carr Valiant, a cousin, are the only friends who remain loyal to the Valiants. Tom Dandridge, Dabney Carr and Valiant meet at a banquet given in honor of Valiant's return to Virginia. Valiant is asked to run for the house of burgesses. He accepts and makes a speech. Valiant's wife, Virginia, and daughter, Jinny, are present. Valiant is elected. Tom Dandridge becomes Valiant's campaign manager. Valiant's wife and daughter become good friends. Mrs. Dandridge and Dabney Carr Valiant visit the Valiants at Three Springs. Dabney Carr Valiant tells Jinny that he has a fortune in old walnut trees. Valiant is elected chairman of the Dandridge Memorial theatre, to be built at Dabney court. At the first meeting Valiant meets Miss Lucy Lee, one of the directors, who is also a descendant of the Lees. He wins and chooses Lucy's portrait of Robert E. Lee, painted by the distant Katherine Page, a famous sweetheart, who is visiting in Virginia. Valiant becomes interested in Miss Lucy. She dies at the end of the summer.

CHAPTER XXIV—Continued.

To the twanging of the deft black fingers, the dancers in the gorgeous arena between files of low-cut gowns and flower-like faces and immaculate swallow-tails, to the yellow parlor lights above the dancers' heads with a splendid crash, the eleven ladies in waiting entered, one and all, shirley, each set upon the dais, leaned her burnished head to receive the crown. What though the bauble was but bristol-board, the jeweled shading but foil and paste? On her head it glowed and trembled as a real diadem. As Valiant set the glittering thing on those rich red wards—"I crown the music of her presence was singing a swift melody in his heart.

His coronation address held no such flowery periods as would have rolled from the major's soul. He had chosen a single paragraph he had lighted on in an old book in the library—a history of the last Crusade in French black letter. He had memorized and memorized the archaic phrasing, keeping the quaint turning of each clause:

"These noble knights bow to your presences, fair lady, and their lofty, whom they know as even in judgment, as dainty in fighting these our arms of arms, and do recommend their allegiance to your Good Grace in as lowly wise as they can. O queen, in whom the whole story of virtue is written with the language of beauty, your eyes which have been only wont to discern the bowed knee of kneeling beauty and, inwardly turned, found always the modest sweetness of a sweet mind, see them, ready in heart and able with their sword only to something but to prevailing."

A hushed rustle of applause—not loud: the merest whisper of silken feet and fashioned flesh tapped softly—testified to a widespread approbation. It was the first night many there had had of John Valiant and in both looks he seemed to find their best ideals.

The queen's curtsey was the signal for the music, which throbbed suddenly into a march, and she stepped down beside him. Couple after couple, knights and ladies, arranged behind them, till the twenty-four stood ready for the grand procession. It was the old-fashioned lancers, but the deliberate strain lent to each movement some thing of the stately effect of the minuet.

Quadrilles were not invented as aids to conversation, and John Valiant's and Shirley's was necessarily limited. The directions were simply flung out—stent" she said as they faced each other after the first change in the figure—"how do you manage it?"

"Home talent with a vengeance. Uncle Jefferson and I did it with our little hatchets. I'm the rose—"

They were swooped apart and Shirley found herself, curtsying to Chilly Lunk. Then she turned to her partner under his breath. "I had my heart set on playing you today. I reckon I've lost my rabbit-foot!"

Opposite, in turn, Patty Page had slipped her dainty hand in John Valiant's. "Ah haven't seen such a lovely dance for years!" she declared. "I'm so glad I came. I'd had bad luck there. Ah wouldn't speak to a soul on earth!"

The exigencies of the figure gave no space for answer, and presently, after certain labyrinthine evolutions, Shirley's eyes were gazing into his again.

"How adorable you look!" he whispered, as he bowed over her hand. "How does it feel to be a queen?"

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The last note of the quadrille slipped into a waltz dreamily slow, and Valiant put his arm about Shirley and they floated away. Once before, in the moonlighted garden at Rosewood, she had lain in his arm for one brief instant then she had seemed like some trapped wood-thing resisting. Now, her slender body swaying to his every motion, she was another creature. Under the drooping tawny hair her face was almost as pale as the white satin of her gown; her lips were parted, and they moved, he could feel her heart rises and fall to her hangnurse breath.

CHAPTER XXV.

By the Sun-Dial.

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Katharine had never looked more handsome; a critical survey of her mirror in Gunston Hall had assured her of that. Never had her poise been more superb, her toilet more soaring—the gown was exquisitely gowned in rose-colored mousseline-de-soie, embroidered in tiny brilliants laid on in Greek patterns. From her neck, in a single splendid loop of iridescence against the rosy mist, depended those priceless pearls—"pearls that no stinginess can't believe," as Betty Page confided to her partner—pearls whose newspaper reproduction (actual diameter) Metropolitan shopgirls had been wont to gape with glistening eyes, and which, in their milky circlet, on her rounded breast, trembled three pale gold-veined orchids.

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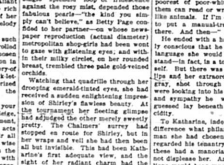

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In another moment the waltz halted and the couples, still arm in arm, strolled, and presently the host, in his crimson Arabian robe, was doffing his plumed hat before her. Circling the polished floor with him, Betty Page had slipped her dainty hand in John Valiant's. "Ah haven't seen such a lovely dance for years!" she declared. "I'm so glad I came. I'd had bad luck there. Ah wouldn't speak to a soul on earth!"

NEW LINE OF CRIMINALITY

Finalized Identification Has Been Taken Up as a Means of Gaining a Livelihood.

John Thompson of Hamilton, Ontario walked into the parlor of his home one night during the week and found his family supping around a coffin in which their respective body was lying. There had been a storm on the Great Lakes, and when Thompson's father read of the finding of the body of John Thompson, fireman of a lost lake steamer, he went to Ketchum Point and identified the body as that of his son. The coffin had just arrived, and Thompson's mother had just advanced to look at the body enclosed when her son entered. Thompson senior could not explain the identification.

But there have been many cases like this in the way of mistaken identification. Every day at the morgues in the large cities there are cases of fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers identifying bodies as those of relatives. Some know them by this mark and some by that, but they are absolutely certain. In some instances mistakes have had to be rectified by undertakers coming to blows.

Practical identification has got to be a regular trade. Inquiry is made at the morgue for a fictitious relative by a member of an identifying gang. The dead are closely observed, incidents of their history and information as to what was found on them are gathered carefully. Then when the unidentified of the gang hears of the dead he goes to the morgue with the body of John Thompson, fireman of a lost lake steamer, he went to Ketchum Point and identified the body as that of his son. The coffin had just arrived, and Thompson's mother had just advanced to look at the body enclosed when her son entered. Thompson senior could not explain the identification.

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Oil Drives Out Coal.

On account of the large production of petroleum in California, and the use for fuel, coal mining has practically ceased in that state. According to the United States geological survey, the production of coal for the last two years has been only 16,747 tons in 1911, and 18,973 tons in 1912. The production of petroleum in California in 1912 was 93,450,787 barrels, of which not less than 58,000,000 barrels was used directly for fuel. Large quantities of oil were also used in place of coal for gas making, and on the estate of J. D. Spreckels of Adelaide being equivalent to one ton of ordinary bituminous coal. It is probable that from 11,000,000 to 15,000,000 tons of coal would be required to replace what California the service now rendered by petroleum in the production of heat, light and power. There is still, however, a large field for coal in California, particularly for domestic use and for the bunker trade at San Francisco, but this is almost exclusively supplied by coal fields of states or from abroad.—Coal Age.

Women for the Pulpit.

Women will be able to enter the ministry in churches in the Canton of Neuchatel, Switzerland, as a result of a vote of the synod of the Protestant church, admitting them to the theological faculty. The decision means that women who graduate in theology will be entitled to the status of the clergy. Neuchatel already has women deacons, deaconis and lawyers, as a result of the non-militant feminist propaganda.

He held her crushed to him. She could feel his heart buddies against her. "I've always known you," he said. "I've known it for years and years. I saw you coming to meet me down a cherry-blossom lane in Kyoto. I've seen your eyes peering from behind a veil in India. I've heard your voice calling to me, through the pelting rain-sheet from the desert nirvana. You are the dream I have gone searching for all my life, Shirley, Shirley, Shirley!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Doctor Speaks.

While the vibrant strings hummed and sang, Valiant and Shirley, the two couples drifted on tireless and content, of blissfully "sat out" dances on the stairway. Katharine Page held court in the gallery, her partner, in the stealthy doubt that was creeping over her spirit. She had been so certain of what would happen that evening that the sight of Shirley's head on the porch with Judge Chalmers and Dandridge hastily had never left her; under a flag of truce she had sent him the "Lady's Handbook," ostensibly to depart before royalty. But the sight of Valiant and Shirley at the knight in purple and gold had not passed again before her. Now the her spirit. She had been so certain among the dancers, and the white smiling eyes and sparkling corsage had disappeared. The end of the next number found her seated on a settee into the flower-banked alcoves sudden- Shirley's cheek—that was not deep—nor was it the dusk through they stood closely, as lovers would, and there was in both their faces a somewhat that Katharine's experience had not had time to cover—a trembling, a radiance. It was as if love never was, on sea or land"—which was Shirley's death-knell to what "sat for her—or than Katharine's heart, her pride, the sudden certification, and for an instant she whole body chilled.

A craving for a glass of water had come over Shirley, and Valiant, as her co-caller solicitously departed to fetch it, sank down beside her. The exhilarating remaining refreshments she had just left off, sauntered lightly out by another door to the terrace for air. A swift glance about her showed her that the coast was clear, and she stepped down to the grass and along the terrace to the sun-dial at the end, to take in the shrubbery. Here the moon-silvered lawn, the fragrant air and with a shiver she dropped her hot face on her hands.

There were no tears. The wave that was falling over her was one of bitter humiliation. She had shot her bolt—with a dog—and missed the goal! For three years she had held Miss Virginia Dandridge's head in the hollow of her shapely hand. Now her head lay on Valiant's breast—at first—and he had turned away to this fame-hatred, vivid girl whom he had known for only a few days.

Heavy footfalls all at once approached her from the direction coming from the house. There was the spitting crunch of gravel, and a man's voice broke the very soul of the passionate night, "Lucky, by Jove! Never thought I'd get a chance like this to see the sun-dial now."

He guided his companion out away and a narrow gravel-path led through the trimmed evergreens to the straight stalk mation of delight. The onyx-pillar stood in the centre of a circle of flagstones, white dahlias, nilgonnette and nasturtiums filled the beds about its base, ivy beyond these, bordered with Arabian white sweet alyssum. Iris and bridal wreath, shading out into tender paler tints, framed the spotless purity like dawning passion.

"What a fine thing it is to be young!" the host laughed. "I'm quoted here—the day we planted the ram-bler. Who's the enchantress, I'm said? That some day, perhaps, I should be the happiest of all at Dumbarton court." He was silent a moment, tracing the Roman numerals on the circle of the dial's rim. "When I was very little," he said, "I used to think that when I was years old, I should—my father and I had a beautiful time—be dead. It was a great mansion like this. It was called Dumbarton court, and it was the people of the Never-Never Land—a sort of beautiful fairy country in which everything happened right." He paused that the Never-Never Land was Dumbarton court. No wonder my father was happy when he found his memory come back to it always' I've wanted to make it so. I was what he was then. And I want the old dial to count happy hours for me."

Something had crept into his tone that struck her with a sudden terror and terror of mind. The hand that had touched her shrinking shoulder and her knees had begun to tremble and she had sunk down on the garden rim, the very soul of the passionate night, touched the haunting melody of "Tales of Hoffmann."

"Shirley—" he said, and now his voice was shaken with a tenderness, "will you make my happiness for me?"

He looked down at her, suddenly, and his eyes fell. Before he answered, however, the dial's shadow had silently appeared, looking about him.

"It has left a veil," he said, her eyes still downcast, her voice just low enough.

The major pounced upon them at the moment when Shirley's head was in the crook of the nefarious design of robbing the sun-dial's shadow of its veil of the solar star. When Katharine put her hand in her cavalier's arm, her eyes formed intention, had become a self-admitted purpose during the motor drive.

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