

# MRS. HAROLD STAGG.

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## CHAPTER VII.

An hour later she and Eleanor were sitting on the piazza.

"I think your uncle really enjoyed his visit."

"I am sure he did—every minute of it."

"He seems very fond of you."

"Oh, he is; and I am so glad to think that he is going to be in New York. He was telling me about his quarters; he has taken three rooms in a boarding-house, and, I'm sure, from the description, that he can't be very comfortable. I've promised to pay him a visit, and put him to rights. He says his socks all need darning," added Eleanor, with a laugh. She had looked up from the morning newspaper, to answer Mrs. Stagg's remark, and she now resumed her reading. A moment later she said: "I see here that Mr. Page's yacht Barbara started from New York day before yesterday, on a cruise northward."

"Ah! then he will soon be here," said Emma, blithely.

Eleanor sat silent for a few moments, looking out over the sea.

"Has Mr. Page no regular occupation, Aunt Emma?" she asked, suddenly.

"He is not in business, if you mean that," replied Mrs. Stagg, after a brief contemplative survey of her fancy work. "You know," she added, "there would be no use in his going into business, for he has all the money he needs, and in these times it is much easier to lose money than to make it."

"I wasn't thinking of business especially."

"Well, you know he isn't a lawyer or a doctor. That is, he doesn't practice law. He may have studied it and been admitted to the bar, for all I know; I shouldn't wonder if he had. It's a very good thing for a young man to do, I've understood, if you mean by a 'regular occupation' a profession or anything of that sort, he has none."

"I thought possibly he might have some strong interest I did not know of. I was aware he was not in any active profession."

"Interest?" echoed Emma. "I should say he had a great many interests." And then, as Eleanor seemed to be waiting for her to continue, she said, firmly, but with a little warmth: "He is excessively fond of horses and his yacht. I believe he had something to do with designing the model of his own. He is a splendid shot. He has traveled a great deal, and speaks several languages. He has a small stock farm, and I've heard him say that when he settled down, he expected to enlarge it and live in the country most of the year. Yes, I should say, on the whole, that he had a very strong interest in farming—in farming and in animals. Naturally, at present he spends a good deal of his time in society. One thing is certain, though, my dear, and that is he will be ready to do anything in reason that you want him to."

A sudden impulse had seized Emma to make this sally, and she looked up at her niece as she spoke, with a meaning smile. Eleanor started and flushed violently. Then she bent over her work, and there was an awkward stillness. Presently Emma interrupted it by saying:

"I have known a great many instances where women have exercised a vast amount of influence over men that were in love with them. There is Tilly McVane, for instance; her husband drank like a fish before she married him, but he promised, if she would have him, never to touch another drop, and he never has to this day; and they are happy as turtles do. What woman has done woman can do again, Eleanor, dear; though, to tell the truth, I don't think one would desire any serious change in Mr. Page. I have never heard a word breathed against him on the score of habits. I know he is charitable, and is always doing kind things; and though he may not have your taste for books and study, I have no doubt that he would be only too ready to take an interest in everything that interested you. Look at me, I scarcely ever opened a book before I was married, and now, what with selecting them for Harold, I consider myself quite a literary person. It isn't wise for people to be too much alike at first."

"Do you mean to say, Aunt Emma," said Eleanor, when these remarks were concluded, "that you think Mr. Page is in love with me?" Her cheeks were glowing vividly as she spoke, and she clasped her hands in front of her.

"You ought to be the best judge of that yourself, my dear," said Emma, suavely, but rather alarmed withal, by the young girl's serious demeanor.

"I should never have thought of such a thing if you had not implied it."

"Well, well, what harm if he is a little enamored?" replied her aunt, smoothing out her work again. "But let me say, he has not made a confidante of me. I am merely judging by appearances. Perhaps I am entirely mistaken."

"It would alter everything," Eleanor was answering the query. "What makes you think so, Aunt Emma? He has been very kind—very, but it never occurred to me that it could be possible—that he—"

She broke off without finishing, looking at her aunt with a distressed air and twisting her fingers nervously.

"You are very young, Eleanor,"

Emma was provoked with herself for having spoken. What she had feared and yet believed impossible was the case; the child had not realized the situation. However, it was too late to draw back now; she might gloss the matter over if it came to the worst, but she had better open the child's eyes a little. "What did you suppose was the meaning of all Mr. Page's attention—his flowers, his constant preference for your society?"

"I knew he liked me, of course."

"Liked you? That is rather a vague term, my dear. Didn't it ever occur to you that he 'liked you' very much better than any one else?"

"I'm afraid that I didn't think much about what he meant," she answered, desolately. "I've been acting wrongly. Aunt Emma, it was pleasant going on and on, and I didn't realize. Oh, yes, I've been very wrong."

"Nonsense. What is there wrong about it? You may have been a little obtuse, perhaps, but you'll know another time, or rather henceforth, for maybe there won't be another time. You mustn't mind me, dear," she added, noticing that Eleanor writhed at the innuendo; "I'm only teasing. It is very likely his own fault if you didn't know. Men are often so fearfully commonplace in their speech even when their actions seem devoted."

Eleanor said, with fervor, after a moment's silence:

"I am very much obliged to you, Aunt Emma."

"For opening your eyes? You are entirely welcome. It occurred to me that it was just possible you might not be realizing the full significance of what such intentions ordinarily imply. It is apt to be a shock to a girl if a man offers himself without having made his intentions pretty clear beforehand, and in such cases she sometimes says things she would not say if she had been more or less prepared, though no girl is ever quite prepared."

Emma spoke calmly. She was disturbed by Eleanor's manner, and yet she judged that her shrinking from the idea of being seriously sought in marriage proceeded from the novelty of it, and that time would effect a change. It was advisable to give her an accurate glimpse of the truth, and yet veil it sufficiently not to offend or disgust her maidenly instincts. She hoped she had accomplished this, and accordingly she was little prepared for the reply she now received.

"I think, Aunt Emma, the sooner I get to work the better. I ought to have done so before," she continued, as Mrs. Stagg gazed at her in blank bewilderment, "but I was having such a pleasant time I let myself drift along."

"Work, Eleanor? I don't understand you."

"You know I have always meant to be a teacher. Uncle Harold persuaded me to come East with him on account of the boys, but now that they are established at school, and I have had all the rest I need, I should like to try to get some pupils, or a situation in a college."

"Eleanor, what do you mean?"

"I have my own living to make, Aunt Emma."

Mrs. Stagg broke into a nervous laugh.

"Are you getting tired of us so soon, my dear? I feared that we should not be able long to compete with the attractions of the 'wild and woolly West.'"

"If I can do equally well here, I should prefer to remain rather than go West; but I imagine that there are more opportunities in some of the smaller new Western colleges or academies for the kind of position I would rather have."

"Eleanor, are you crazy? Do you realize what you are saying? Pupils! A position in a college! And all because I suggested that a young man might be in love with you! I gave you credit for more sense."

Emma rocked her chair with offended dignity that found vent for its pent-up annoyance in another scornful laugh. Could the child possibly be in earnest? It was too ridiculous; and yet there she sat, with her hands clasped before her, and an intense expression which might betoken anything.

"No, Aunt Emma, Mr. Page had nothing to do with it, except that if it had not been for him I should very likely have begun to make some inquiries before we came to Beverly, as to my chances of finding employment. I ought to have done so, but, as I have already said, I was weak enough to put it off a little longer. I am proposing merely to carry out the plan I have had in mind all along—my life-work."

Emma looked at her curiously.

"You are talking gibberish. Do you not consider it part of a woman's 'life-work' to be well married?"

"If it so happens, certainly."

"So happens! One would think I were referring to the bite of a mad dog. I am older than you, Eleanor, and I have seen the world. There is no more foolish, not to say unnatural, attitude for a woman to assume, than to set her face against marriage. A self-chosen old maid is a pitiable person."

"I have no wish to be an old maid," said Eleanor, with a smile. "Indeed, I hope to be married some day."

"Then why this rigmorle?"

"I do not see what my being married or not being married has to do

with the question of supporting myself."

"Supporting yourself? Do you not know, Eleanor, that, in bringing you to live with him, your uncle Harold took upon himself your support? That is no longer an open question. He intends to provide you with a home until you are married, or, if you persist in remaining single, you need have no fear that he will turn you out of doors or leave your future unprovided for. Your uncle is a just man."

"I know he is, and that both of you are far kinder to me than I deserve. But do you not understand, Aunt Emma, that I would rather make my own way, that I prefer to be independent and not a burden on anybody? I am grateful to you, and I shall never forget all you have done for me, but I shouldn't be happy to go on in this way any longer; I want to do something."

The eager words and demeanor startled Emma. She bent her brows on her work and rocked restlessly. She could see nothing but ridiculous folly and misguided waywardness in the proposition. Harold would never consent to such a scheme; it was almost foolish to think or argue about it. Still, the child seemed alarmingly earnest, and it could not safely be predicted what she might not be capable of. Presently, Mrs. Stagg replied with deliberation:

"There is no objection that I can see to your doing something, as you call it, Eleanor. You may do whatever you wish. If you think it necessary to your peace of mind to earn a little money by your own exertions—which strikes me, I must say, as slightly quixotic, considering how well off your uncle is—but, as I say, if it would make you happier, there is no possible reason why you should not utilize any talents you have. I know of several girls who have dressed themselves or added materially to their incomes through what they have made by painting on china, or contributing to the magazines or by giving whist lessons. Whist is so much the fashion now, that I dare say, if you insist upon it, I could get you a class easily enough. In that way, you would be able to satisfy your conscience, and still at the same time avoid any radical change in your surroundings."

"I am afraid," said Eleanor, shaking her head sadly, "that my conscience could not be so easily satisfied, or rather, Aunt Emma, that it isn't a question of conscience only, but of preference for a particular mode of life. I am interested in study and in books, and—and in the atmosphere which belongs to them, and I should never be happy among people—"

She stopped short, embarrassed how to proceed.

"Why don't you finish? I know quite what you wish to say—among people who don't go in especially for anything of the sort. Well, we don't pretend to be more literary than the average person, but there are other things in the world fully as important as books, Eleanor, and one of them is common sense. Some women in my place would say: 'Go and be a teacher in a Western college, if you wish to,' and wash their hands of you. But I cannot bring myself to believe that you are really serious when you talk so."

(To be continued.)

## WHY HE LAUGHS AT DOCTORS

Representative Livingston of Georgia, Tells Good Story.

Representative Livingstone of Georgia, believes that he got the better of the surgeons this fall and he is congratulating himself accordingly. As a result of his arduous campaign work he became possessed of a very bad throat. It refused to yield to ordinary treatment, so he went to a distinguished surgeon in his part of the country. The surgeon took a glance at the inflamed organ and then got out his knives and prepared for an operation. Mr. Livingstone demurred. After much pleading he was granted twenty-four hours in which to tighten up his nerve for the ordeal. While engaged in the tightening process another patient came along, was stretched out on the operating table and died before the surgeon finished with him. Livingstone heard of this and stood off the surgeon on one pretext or another until he was ready to start for Washington. Just before leaving home he came upon an old negro mammy who offered a cure for his throat. She soaked a lump of sugar in turpentine. The dose did all the old mammy claimed for it. "And that," said Representative Livingstone, "is the reason I laugh every time I see a doctor's sign."

## Youth and Happiness.

After all, it is open to dispute whether or not people are happy when they are young. Only one boy in town can carry water for the elephant; and he is oppressed by the thought that his father will spring the "detrimental to morals" argument on him just before the big show opens.

Perhaps, to dim it all, there is more pleasure in seeming young when you know that you are not than in being so.

Else why the complexion remedies, wrinkle chasers, and hair retainers, to say nothing of false teeth and other falseness?

## Frogskin Makes Tough Leather.

Frogskin makes the toughest leather known in proportion to its thickness.

## Come of Age Early.

In Hungary the legal age of an individual dates only from baptism.

# NEBRASKA IN GENERAL

## TEACHERS COMING IN FORCE.

Superintendent Looks Forward to a Well Attended Meeting.

Superintendent of Instruction Fowler believes the meeting of the state teachers this year will be more successful and of more interest than any previous meeting. In an interview he said:

"The teachers of Nebraska are coming to the state association this year in larger numbers than ever before. The vastly better program is attracting them. Many will be here Monday and Tuesday (29th and 30th) to take the state examination for life certificates. In fact, the office of the state superintendent of public instruction will not be large enough to contain them all. Many other teachers will be in Tuesday to see the art exhibit before the regular meetings begin. The county superintendents will all be here Tuesday to attend the business session in representative hall and to discuss school law. The educational council will meet Tuesday evening and Wednesday forenoon, and Wednesday afternoon nine meetings of the auxiliary association will be in full blast. From that time until Friday night you won't be able to throw a snowball on O street, or between the Lindell and the Lincoln, from St. Paul's church to the university without hitting a schoolman. And they will not all dissolve from view Friday night. Many will remain over Saturday to do some shopping, and others will remain faithful to the program at St. Paul's church Friday evening and go to the "play" at the Oliver Saturday afternoon or night, "Much Ado About Nothing."

## CLAMORING FOR GRAIN CARS.

Farmers Complain That They Cannot Get Their Crops to Market.

THAYER, Neb.—The farmers living around Thayer are complaining bitterly of the treatment that the Farmers' Grain Elevator company is receiving at Thayer from the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley railroad. They assert that the Elkhorn is furnishing the trust elevators with empty cars and that the farmers are unable to get a car. Officers of the company are leaving for Omaha, where they will see the proper officials and see if they cannot receive fair treatment from the Elkhorn. The grain bins are full and farmers have had to stop threshing machines. They think it pretty hard to have to stop taking grain when the company elevators are taking in grain right along and are receiving cars.

## BENEDICT, Neb.—Elevator men on the Kansas City & Omaha railroad

complain that since the road has been operated by the Burlington it is harder work to get cars than under the old management. Every elevator is full of grain and many of them in York county on the Kansas City & Omaha have filled the driveways. Corn shellers and threshing machines have had to stop, as elevators cannot take any more grain.

## FREE DELIVERY IS ASKED.

Protest Against Changing Land Leasing Laws.

WASHINGTON — Representative Burkett on Wednesday called at the postoffice department, and requested the establishment of a free delivery service at Plattsmouth. Three deliveries of mail in the business portion and two deliveries in the residence sections is desired a day.

Both Burkett and Mercer introduced resolutions in the house from the George A. Custer post, Grand Army of the Republic, of Omaha, protesting against any change of laws affecting the leasing of public lands in Nebraska. Frank I. Teeter of Nebraska, clerk in the pension bureau, has received a salary promotion from \$900 to \$1,000 a year.

## Saves Life by a Miracle.

BEATRICE, Neb.—Gus Schmidt, a resident of this city, came very near losing his life while shoveling snow off the roof of a brick building. He accidentally slipped off the rear edge of the roof that was concealed by the heavy snow drifts and fortunately caught himself by a piece of 2x4 projecting from the fire wall. He hung there for some time suspended forty feet above the ground, and by the greatest effort succeeded in pulling himself back on the roof, thereby saving himself from a serious if not fatal accident.

## Found Hanging in Barn.

BLOOMFIELD, Neb.—William Hilkemeier, a well-to-do German farmer, living south of this place, was found hanging from a beam in his barn. When the body was discovered life had been extinct for some hours. Hilkemeier was a widower with several small children. It is supposed grief over the loss of his wife impelled his rash act.

## THE LIVE STOCK MARKET.

Latest Quotations from South Omaha and Kansas City.

### SOUTH OMAHA.

SHEEP—Packers claim they have been paying too high prices here for some time, as compared with other markets, and that they are now going to get this market down in line with others. As compared with yesterday afternoon the market is fully 10¢ lower, or, as compared with yesterday morning, the decline amounts to fully 15¢ and in some cases sales were made that looked even worse than that. The least decline was on strictly choice natives that packers could use for their Christmas trade. Owing to this sudden tumble in prices trading was naturally rather slow and it was late before a clearance was made. The stocker and feeder market continued about steady. Supplies were light, so that, while the demand was also limited, prices showed very little change. Quotations for fed stock: Choice lambs, \$5.00@5.25; fair to good lambs, \$4.50@5.00; choice yearlings, \$4.00@4.25; fair to good yearlings, \$3.50@4.00; choice wethers, \$3.00@3.25; fair to good, \$2.50@2.75; feeder lambs, \$3.00@3.40; feeder yearlings, \$2.00@2.25; feeder wethers, \$2.75@3.00; feeder cows, \$1.50@2.25.

### HOGS—Chicago was reported 10¢ to 15¢ lower and the decline here was just about the same. The bulk of the hogs sold from \$3.75 to \$3.85, with a few choice loads going at \$3.75 and \$3.10. The light-weight pigs sold mostly from \$3.50 to \$3.85. The lighter the weights the harder it was to make a sale and pigs were extremely hard to sell at satisfactory prices and they brought considerably less than hogs. Trading was not active at the decline, but still the bulk of the arrivals was disposed of in good season. The close of the market was, if anything, a shade weaker than the opening.

### KANSAS CITY.

CATTLE—Receipts, 3,150 natives, 350 Texans, 20 native calves; beef steers, cull at last Friday's prices; good corn cows and heifers, 15¢ to 20¢ lower; range calves, 10¢ to 20¢ lower; choice export and dressed beef steers, \$5.10@5.25; fair to good, \$4.50@5.05; stockers and feeders, \$2.50@3.00; western fed steers, \$2.50@3.00; Texas cows, \$2.00@2.25; native cows, \$1.50@2.25; native heifers, \$1.75@2.00; canners, \$0.75@2.25; bulls, \$1.50@2.25; calves, \$2.50@3.00.

HOGS—Receipts, 7,000 head; market dull and 10¢ to 15¢ lower; top, \$3.20; bulk of sales, \$2.00@2.12½; heavy, \$6.07½@6.20; mixed packers, \$5.50@6.10; light, \$5.80@6.05; yorkers, \$6.00@6.05; pigs, \$5.50@6.00.

SHEEP AND LAMBS—Receipts, 2,000 head; market steady to easy; native lambs, \$4.00@5.40; western lambs, \$3.50@4.35; fed ewes, \$3.00@3.25; native wethers, \$3.00@4.00; western wethers, \$3.00@4.20; stockers and feeders, \$2.00@3.35.

## GET FIVE YEARS EACH.

Five More St. Louis Boodlers Are Sentenced.

ST. LOUIS—The joint trial of five former members of the house of delegates, which began Tuesday, ended in a verdict of five years for each man in the penitentiary. The defendants, John A. Sheridan, Charles J. Denny, Charles Gutke, Edmund Bersch and T. E. Albright, were convicted on charges of bribes in connection with passage of Suburban street car bill, to accomplish which it was charged \$75,000 had been placed on deposit to be used as required. The five defendants, after hearing the verdict, filed motions for a new trial and each was released on bond.

These cases make fourteen bribery cases that have gone to trial as the result of the investigation of municipal corruption, one case being acquitted on the order of the judge.

The testimony offered by the state in the joint case all tended to show that a combine existed in the house of delegates to control legislation, by which means the members of this combine could secure money for their votes.

## BLOW OF SHARKEY KILLED.

Slayer of Banker Fish Found Guilty of Manslaughter.

NEW YORK—The jury in the case of Thomas J. Sharkey, accused of the murder of Nicholas Fish, the wealthy banker, returned a verdict of manslaughter in the second degree and recommended that the mercy of the court be exercised.

Fish was killed in September. He met two women on the street and accompanied them to a saloon, where they were joined by Sharkey and another woman. The two men had a dispute, during which Fish was pushed out on the street and evidence for the prosecution was to the effect that Sharkey struck Fish, knocking him down. He died a few hours later. Although he had suffered from different diseases the doctors testified that a blow was the direct cause of death.

Percy Goelin, a 15-year-old boy, who carried the mail at Springview, has been brought in by Deputy Homan on a charge of opening the mail sacks and extracting letters.

## Vote Down Franchise.

NEW YORK—A motion to recommend the majority report favoring the grant of the Pennsylvania railroad tunnel franchise was voted down by the board of aldermen Tuesday. The vote was 35 to 32. To pass the franchise a majority of the board and not a majority of those voting is necessary. Thus forty votes will be needed to grant the franchise. Six members refused to vote on the motion to recommend.