

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 corporation, which his father founded and which was the principal source of his wealth, has failed. He voluntarily turns over his private fortune to the receiver for the corporation. His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a white bull dog and Damory court, a neglected estate in Virginia. On the way to Damory court he meets Shirley Dandridge, an auburn-haired beauty, and decides that he is going to like Virginia immensely. Shirley's mother, Mrs. Dandridge, and Major Bristow exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the major, Valiant's father, and a man named Saxon were rivals for the hand of Mrs. Dandridge in her youth. Saxon and Valiant fought a duel on her account in which the former was killed. Valiant finds Damory court overgrown with weeds and creepers and the buildings in a very much neglected condition. He decides to rehabilitate the place and make the land produce a living for him. Valiant saves Shirley from the bite of a snake, which bites him. Knowing the deadliness of the bite, Shirley sucks the poison from the wound and saves his life.

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

"Listen, Shirley. What's that Rickey is telling Ranston?"

"Don't you come heah wid yo' no-count play-actin'. Cyan' fool Ranston wid no sich snek-story neidah. Ain' no moos'in at Dam'ry Co'ot, en nebbah was!"

"There was, too!" insisted Rickey. "One bit him and Miss Shirley found him and sent Uncle Jefferson for Doctor Southall and it saved his life! So there! Doctor Southall told Mrs. Mason. And he isn't a man who's just come to fix it up, either; he's the r-ally truly mos' that owns it!"

"Who on eajh is that child talking about?"

Shirley put her arm around her mother and kissed her. Her heart was beating quickly. "The owner has come to Damory Court. He—"

The small book Mrs. Dandridge held fell to the floor. "The owner! What owner?"

"Mr. Valiant—Mr. John Valiant. The son of the man who abandoned it so long ago." As she picked up the fallen volume and put it into her mother's hands, Shirley was startled by the whiteness of her face.

"Dearest!" she cried. "You are ill. You shouldn't have come down."

"No. It's nothing. I've been shut up all day. Go and open the other window."

Shirley threw it wide. "Can I get your salts?" she asked anxiously.

Her mother shook her head. "No," she said, almost sharply. "There's nothing whatever the matter with me. Only my nerves aren't what they used to be. I suppose—and snakes always did get on them. Now, give me the gist of it first. I can wait for the rest. There's a tenant at Damory Court. And his name's John—Valiant. And he was bitten by a moccasin. When?"

"This afternoon."

Mrs. Dandridge's voice shook. "Will he—will he recover?"

"Oh, yes."

"Beyond any question?"

"The doctor says so."

"And you found him, Shirley—"

"I was there when it happened." She had crouched down on the rug in her favorite posture, her coppery hair against her mother's knee, catching strange reddish over-tones like molten metal, from the shaded lamp. Mrs. Dandridge fingered her cane nervously.



But More Than Once Shirley Saw Her Hands Clasp Themselves Together. Here she dropped her hand on the girl's head.

CHAPTER XV.

The Anniversary.

The story was not a long one, though it omitted nothing: the morning fox-hunt and the identification of the new arrival at Damory Court as the owner of yesterday's stalled motor; the afternoon raid on the jessamine, the conversation with John Valiant in the woods.

Mrs. Dandridge, gazing into the fire, listened without comment, but more than once Shirley saw her hands clasp themselves together and thought, too, that she seemed strangely pale. The swift and tragic sequel to that meeting was the hardest to tell, and as she erded she put up her hand to her shoulder, holding it hard. "It was horrible!" she said. Yet now she did not shudder. Strangely enough, the sense of loathing which had been surging over her at recurrent inter-

vals ever since that hour in the wood, had vanished utterly!

She read the newspaper article aloud and her mother listened with an expression that puzzled her. When she finished, both were silent for a moment, then she asked, "You must have known his father, dearest; didn't you?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Dandridge after a pause. "I—knew his father."

Shirley said no more, and facing each other in the candle-glow, across the spotless damask, they talked, as with common consent, of other things. She thought she had never seen her mother more brilliant. An odd excitement was flooding her cheek with red and she chatted and laughed as she had not done for years.

But after dinner the gaiety and effervescence faded quickly and Mrs. Dandridge went early to her room. She mounted the stair with her arm thrown about Shirley's pliant waist. At her door she kissed her, looking at her with a strange smile. "How curious," she said, as if to herself, "that it should have happened today!"

The reading-lamp had been lighted on her table. She drew a slim gold chain from the bosom of her dress and held to the light a little locket-brooch it carried. It was of black enamel, with a tiny laurel-wreath of pearls on one side encircling a single diamond. The other side was of crystal and covered a baby's russet-colored curl. In her fingers it opened and disclosed a miniature at which she looked closely for a moment.

Her eyes turned restlessly about the room. It had been hers as a girl, for Rosewood had been the old Garland homestead. It seemed now all at once to be full of calling memories of her youth.

"How strange that it should have been today!" It had been on Shirley's lips to question, but the door had closed, and she went slowly downstairs. She sat a while thinking, but at length grew restless and began to walk to and fro across the floor, her hands clasped behind her head so that the cool air filled her flowing sleeves. In the hall she could hear the leisurely kon-kon—kon-kon of the tall clock. The evening outside was exquisitely still and the metallic monotone was threaded with the airy fiddle-fiddle of crickets in the grass and punctuated with the rain-glad cloap of a frog.

Shirley stepped lightly down to the wet grass. Looking back, she could see her mother's lighted blind. All around the ground was spotted with rose-petals, looking in the squares of light like bloody rain. She skimmed the lawn and ran a little way down the lane. A shuffling sound presently fell on her ear.

"Is that you, Unc' Jefferson?" she called softly.

"Yas'm!" The footsteps came nearer. "Et's me, Miss Shirley." He uttered noiselessly, and she could see his bent form vibrating in the gloom. "Yo' reck'n Ah done fergit?"

"No, indeed. I knew you wouldn't do that. How is he?"

"He right much bettah," he replied in the same guarded tone. "Doctah he say he be all right in er few days, and they haven't done much more than clean up." He laughed, and threw the magazine at the dog who dodged it with injured alacrity. "After all, Chum," he remarked, "it's been thirty years getting in this condition. I guess we're doing pretty well."

He stretched luxuriously. "I'll take a hand at it myself tomorrow. I'm as right as rain again now, thanks to Aunt Daph and the doctor. Something of a crusty citizen, the doctor, but he's all to the good."

A heavy step came along the porch and Uncle Jefferson appeared with a tray holding a covered dish with a plate of biscuit and a round jam-pot. "Look here," said John Valiant, "I had my luncheon three hours ago, I'm being stuffed like a milk-fed turkey."

The old man smiled widely. "Et's jes' er I'll snack er broth," he said. "Reck'n et'll kinder float eroun' de yuddah things. Dis' yeah pot's dat apple-buttah whut Miss Mattie Sue sen' yo' by Rickey Snyder."

Valiant sniffed with satisfaction. "I'm getting so confoundedly spoiled," he said, "that I'm tempted to stay sick and do nothing but eat. By the way, Uncle Jefferson, where did Rickey come from? Does she belong here?"

"No, suh. She come fom Hell's-Half-Acre."

"What's that?"

"Dat's dat ornery passie o' folks yondah on de Dome," explained Uncle Jefferson. "Deys been dah long's Ah kin recommembah—jes' er ramshackle lot o' shifless po'-white trash whut git erlong anyways 't all."

"That's interesting," said Valiant. "So Rickey belonged there?"

"Yas, suh; nebbah 'd a-come down heah cep'in' fo' Mis' Shirley. She de one whut fotch de I'll gal outen dat place, en put huf wid Mis' Mattie Sue, three yeah ergo."

A sudden color came into John Valiant's cheeks. "Tell me about it." His voice vibrated eagerly.

"Well, suh," continued Uncle Jefferson, "dey was one o' dem low-down Hell's-Half-Acres, name' Greef King, whut call hese'f de mayah ob de Dome, en he went on de rampage onday, en took atnah his wife. She was

er po' sickly 'oman, wid er I'll gal five yeah ob' er fust husband'. He done beat huf heap o' times befo', but dis time he boun' ter finish huh. Ah reck'n he was too drunk fo' dat, en she got erway en run down heah. Et was wintah time en dah's snow on de groun'. Dah's er road fom de Dome dat hits de Red Road clost' ter Rosewood—dat ar's de Dandridge place—en she come dah. Reck'n she was er pitiful-lookin' obstacle. Peas lak she done put de I'll gal up in de cabin lof' en hid de laddah, en she mos' crazy fo' feah Greef gi' huh. She lef' he huntin' fo' de young'un when she run erway. Dey was on'y Mis' Judith en Mis' Shirley en de gal Em'line at Rosewood. Well, suh, dey wa'n't no time ter sen' fo' men. Whut yo' reck'n Mis' Shirley do? She ain' afeahd o' nuffin on dis yerf, en she on'y sebetteen yeah ob' den, too. She don't tell Mis' Judith—no, suh!—She run out ter de stable en saddle huh hoss, en she gallop up dat road ter Hell's-Half-Acre lak er shot outen er shovel."

Valiant brought his hands together sharply. "Yes, yes," he said. "And then?"

"When she come ter Greef King's cabin, he done foun' de laddah, en one er he foots was on de rung. He had er ax in he han'. De po' I'll gal was peepin' down thoo' de cracks o' de flo', en prayin' de bestes' she know how. She say arterwards dat she reck'n de Good Lawd sen' er angel, fo' Mis' Shirley were all in white—she didn't stop ter change huh close. She didn't say nuffin, Mis' Shirley didn't. She on'y lay huh han' on Greef King's ahm, en he look at huh face, en he drop he ax en go. Den she clumb de laddah en fotch de chille down in huh ahms en take huh on de hoss en come back. Dat de way et happen, suh."

"And Rickey was that little child?"

"Yas, suh, she sho' was. In de mawnin' er posse done ride up ter Hell's-Half-Acre en take Greef King in. De majah he arkyde de case fo' de State, en when he done git thoo', dey mos' put de tow eroun' King's nek in de co'ot room. He done got six yeah, en et mos' broke de majah's ha't dat dey couldn't give him no mo'. He wuz cert'n'y er bad sig, dat Greef wuz. Dey say he done swah he gwinteter do up de majah when he git out."

Such was the story which Uncle Jefferson told, standing in the doorway. When his shuffling step had retreated, Valiant went to the table and picked up a slim toiled volume that lay there. It was "Lucille," which he had found in the hall the night of his arrival. He opened it to a page where, pressed and wrinkled but still retaining its bright red pigment, lay what had been a rose.

He stood looking at it abstractedly, his nostrils widening to its crushed spicy scent, then closed it and slipped it into his pocket.



"I'm Tempted to Stay Sick and Do Nothing but Eat."

sung old songs to her. Sad songs! Even in those pinafore years Shirley had vaguely realized that pain lay behind the brave gay mask. Was there something—some event—that had caused that dull-colored life and unfulfillment? And was today, perhaps, its anniversary?

John Valiant sat propped up on the library couch, an open magazine unheeded on his knee. The reading-stand beside him was a litter of letters and papers. The bow-window was open and the honeysuckle breeze blew about him, lifting his hair and ruffling the leaves of the papers. In the garden three darkies were laboring, under the supervision of Uncle Jefferson. The unsightly weeds and lichen were gone from the graveled paths, and from the fountain pool, whose shaft now spouted a slender spray shivered by the breeze into a million diamonds, which fell back into the pool with a tintinabulant trickle and drip.

The master of Damory Court closed the magazine with a sigh. "If I could only do it all at once!" he muttered. "It takes such a confounded time. Four days they've been working now, and they haven't done much more than clean up." He laughed, and threw the magazine at the dog who dodged it with injured alacrity. "After all, Chum," he remarked, "it's been thirty years getting in this condition. I guess we're doing pretty well."

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CHAPTER XVI.

In Devil-John's Day.

He was still sitting motionless when there came a knock at the door and it opened to admit the gruff voice of Doctor Southall. A big form was close behind him.

"Hell Up, I see. I took the liberty of bringing Major Bristow."

The master of Damory Court came forward, limping the least trifle—and shook hands.

"Glad to know you, sah," said the

major. "Allow me to congratulate you; it's not every one who gets bitten by one of those infernal moccasins that lives to talk about it. You must be a pet of Providence, or else you have a cast-iron constitution, sah."

Valiant waved his hand toward the man of medicine, who said, "I reckon Miss Shirley was the Providence in the case. She had sense enough to send for me quick and speed did it."

"Well, sah," the major said, "I reckon under the circumstances, your first impressions of the section aren't anything for us to brag about."

"I'm delighted; it's hard for me to tell how much."

"Wait till you know the fool place," growled the doctor testily. "You'll change your tune."

The major smiled genially. "Don't be taken in by the doctor's pessimism. You'd have to get a yoke of three-year oxen to drag him out of this state."

"It would take as many for me," Valiant laughed a little. "You who have always lived here, can scarcely understand what I am feeling, I imagine. You see, I never knew till quite recently—my childhood was largely spent abroad, and I have no near relatives—that my father was a Virginian and that my ancestors always lived here. Why, there's a room upstairs with the very toys they played with when they were children! To learn that I belong to it all; that I myself am the last link in such a chain!"

"The ancestral instinct," said the doctor. "I'm glad to see that it means something still, in these rotten days."

"Of course," John Valiant continued, "every one knows that he has ancestors. But I'm beginning to see that what you call the ancestral instinct needs a locality and a place. In a way it seems to me that an old estate like this has a soul too—a sort of clan or family soul that reacts on the descendant."

"Rather a Japanese idea, isn't it?" observed the major. "But I know what you mean. Maybe that's why old Virginian families hang on to their land in spite of hell and high-water. They count their forebears real live people, quite capable of turning over in their graves."

"Mine are begining to seep very real to me. Though I don't even know their Christian names yet, I can judge them by their handwork. The man who built Damory Court had a sense of beauty and of art."

"And their share of devilry, too," put in the doctor.

"I suppose so," admitted his host. "At this distance I can bear even that. But good or bad, I'm deeply thankful that they chose Virginia. Since I've been laid up, I've been browsing in the library here—"

"A bit out of date now, I reckon," said the major, "but it used to pass muster. Your grandfather was something of a book-worm. He wrote a history of the family, didn't he?"

"Yes, I've found it. 'The Valiants of Virginia.' I'm reading the Revolutionary chapters now. It never seemed real before—it's been only a slice of impersonal and rather dull history. But the book has made it come alive. I'm having the thrill of the globe-trotter the first time he sees the Tower of London or the field of Waterloo. I see more than that stubble-field out yonder; I see a big wooden stockade with soldiers in ragged buff and blue guarding it."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

NO MORE MARRIAGE RISKS

Reformers of Today Certainly Are Throwing All Kinds of Safeguards Around the Ceremony.

Under the microscope of modern criticism marriage seems to be honey-combed with false ideas and tyrannous customs. So wrong is it that we almost doubt if any of our grandparents could have been happy, and we sigh with relief when we consider that at last modern intellect is about to demolish the old-fashioned methods and build in their place a scheme of common-sense marriage in which no sorrow and regret can cloud the domestic hearth.

What a primitive, careless thing marriage has been hitherto! Just because a man and a woman have been attracted to one another they have rushed blindly into a lifelong partnership without any careful forethought or inquiry.

But we see the end of all that nonsense. Already the new marriage—the careful, well-considered mating—has arrived. The first medically examined wedding has been celebrated in this country. Surely this will give a lead to the world.

In future the first consideration will be the medical certificate, and after that the certificate of temperament. No man and woman will enter the



state of matrimony without the consent of learned psychologists to testify to their suitability to one another.

And then the financial certificate, the considered judgment of economic specialists as to ways and means. However physically sound and temperamentally suitable the man and woman may be, the new marriage will insist that their income be sufficient to insure a life of comfort according to their normal standards. Our marriage reformers are going to allow us to take no risks.—New York Telegram.

Doing Their Best.

Little Maggie had not been to the country before, and, getting lonesome, she was told she might go to the barn and look for eggs. Presently she returned without any.

"Couldn't you find any eggs, dear?" asked her mother.

"No. The hens were scratching all around as hard as they could, but they hadn't found a single egg," was the doleful reply.

A Misinterpretation.

Miss Elderleigh—So you remarked to Katherine that I looked as old as the hills. Now, don't deny it; I heard you.

Jack Spott—O-er-but you misunderstand. I was merely comparing your age with that of the H.H. young ladies I am acquainted with—twins, you know.

Probably Will.

"Another Chicago woman has murdered her husband for treating her brutally."

"That ought to be a lesson to him!"

The setting hen may be a loafer, but she delivers the goods.

TAKE SALTS TO FLUSH KIDNEYS IF BACK HURTS

Says Too Much Meat Forms Uric Acid Which Clogs the Kidneys and Irritates the Bladder.

Most folks forget that the kidneys, like the bowels, get sluggish and clogged and need a flushing occasionally, else we have backache and dull misery in the kidney region, severe headaches, rheumatic twinges, torpid liver, acid stomach, sleeplessness and all sorts of bladder disorders.

You simply must keep your kidneys active and clean, and the moment you feel an ache or pain in the kidney region, get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any good drug store here, take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and is harmless to flush clogged kidneys and stimulate them to normal activity. It also neutralizes the acids in the urine so it no longer irritates, thus ending bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is harmless; inexpensive; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everybody should take now and then to keep their kidneys clean, thus avoiding serious complications.

A well-known local druggist says he sells lots of Jad Salts to folks who believe in overcoming kidney trouble while it is only trouble.—Adv.

Reformer Rebuffed.

The nervous lady was calling on the calm and collected mother of six.

"To look at the baby!" shrieked the caller.

"What's the matter with the baby?" smiled the mother.

"He's playing with a big carving knife!"

"I see he is. But don't you worry. It's an old carving knife, and even if he did dull it a little, we have a lovely machine in the kitchen that will sharpen it again a jiffy. You were saying?"

FACE COVERED WITH PIMPLES

214 Brevard St., Tampa, Fla.—"Some three years ago I commenced to suffer from a rash on my face and back. Before the pimples came on my face there were a lot of blackheads. It looked as if the blackheads turned into pimples because after a little while all of them were gone and my face was covered with pimples. They were small at first but gradually grew and right at the end of each pimple it was all white. I carelessly picked them with my finger nails, which made them spread, and I soon discovered them on my back. My back was covered with pimples and my face the same way. At night I could hardly sleep on account of the burning and itching sensation they caused. I did not like to go out because the pimples caused disfigurement."

"Seeing the advertisement of Cuticura Soap and Ointment in one of the magazines I sent for a sample. I bought some Cuticura Soap and Ointment, and I am glad to be able to say that I am entirely cured of pimples." (Signed) Jno. O. Darlington, Jan. 25, 1913.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free with 32-p. Skin Book. Address postcard "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston."—Adv.

Found a Tintoretto.

A municipal councillor, Adrien Mithouard, is responsible for the discovery of a masterpiece among the piles of old canvases put aside as almost valueless in the municipal storerooms at Auteuil, Paris. His curiosity was aroused by the aspect of one of the canvases, which was so black that practically nothing was visible, and ordering the picture scrubbed, at "Adoration of the Magi" by Tintoretto was disclosed.

ACHY FEELINGS, PAIN IN LIMBS

and all Malarious indications removed by Elixir Babek, that well known remedy for all such diseases.

"I have taken up the three bottles of your 'Elixir Babek,' and have not felt so well and entirely free from pain in limbs for five years."—Mrs. E. Higgins Jacksonville, Fla.

Elixir Babek 50 cents, all druggists or by Parcel Post prepaid from Kloczewski & Co., Washington, D. C.

Both Hands.

"Do you know," said the wearied dame, "that you play a great deal like Josef Hofmann?"

"Really? Aren't you joking?" said the sad specimen.

"Not at all. You both use your hands."—Dartmouth Jack o' Lantern.

RUB-MY-TISM

Will cure your Rheumatism and all kinds of aches and pains—Neuralgia Cramps, Colic, Sprains, Bruises, Cuts Old Sores, Burns, etc. Antiseptic Anodyne. Price 25c.—Adv.

Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the Signature of *Dr. J. C. Fletcher* In Use For Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Her Experience.

Ethel—Man proposes—
Marie—Yes, but he needs encourage ment.

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