

The Dollar Bride

by Mary Inlay Taylor

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ELEVENTH INSTALLMENT
"Something terrible must have happened!" cried Angie, with a flash. "I—I know it!"

The major nodded, looking past her out of the window.

"There's King Haddon coming in here," he exclaimed. "Go let him in, Angie; I'm going to finish my breakfast Haddon or no Haddon! You can tell him so—if you've a mind to."

Angie, flushed and angry, hurried out of the room, glad to escape those shrewd eyes.

Haddon would not wait in the library.

"Where's the major? At breakfast? I'll go right in—if you don't mind?" and he went, in spite of Angie's protests.

"Hello! Still at breakfast?" he said, as his eyes fell on the old man's engrossed attitude.

The major started up, half rising from the table, but Haddon stopped him.

"Sit down, Lomax. I don't want to starve you," he laughed. "I can wait—Angie didn't want to let me in here anyway."

"I said I wouldn't see you until I'd finished. What's the matter at this hour anyway? I haven't robbed the bank."

Kingdon Haddon laughed. "Come in, Angie," he said as the girl tried to pass quickly through the room to the kitchen, "I haven't come to talk secrets and your uncle's crusty—I need protection."

Angie stopped, smiling and flushed, and leaned on a chair, looking at him. She liked Kingdon Haddon but she was afraid of his wife; she could not have explained her fear of her, but it existed. Haddon was sitting on the edge of an empty serving-table.

"I came in to ask you a question, Lomax," he said irreverently. "You know about such things. How much is Gordon's place worth now? I mean the house and grounds, including the river lot next to yours."

Major Lomax pushed his chair back, felt in his pocket for his old pipe and began to fill it carefully.

"Near as I can figure—about six or seven thousand. The house needs repairs. Why," he added, "What's hit him?"

Haddon looked absently out of the window. "How should I know? Family troubles, reckon. The bank holds the mortgage. Helena doesn't want me to touch it. I don't know what to say about it yet."

Major Lomax rose and began to tramp up and down.

Where's Gordon going to take his wife? he asked sharply, "she's rooted there—and so is he, for that matter."

Perhaps the young people think it's old-fashioned," suggested Haddon, "or Mrs. Gordon's tired of the housekeeping and wants an apartment—my wife does."

"Shucks" the major sank down into his chair again, strumming on the table with his fingers. "You know better, Haddon! There's some trouble. I'm sorry for Will Gordon. He's a good man, and she's a good woman. She'll take it hard."

The banker nodded, glancing thoughtfully across at Angie's pale face and pleading brown eyes.

"I saw Miss Gordon on Monday—in Washington," he remarked

thoughtfully. "In Washington?" Angie started, "why I didn't know she'd been away!"

Haddon nodded grimly, considering her pretty flush and her round, soft eyes critically.

"She was there all right. A decided beauty, too. I hadn't noticed it so much before. How's the boy turning out, Lomax?"

"Roddy?" The major twisted his old mouth into a queer expression. "Sowing wild oats; Haddon, I reckon. He's in New York, Greenough Trust Company, gets twenty-five dollars a week—or did six months ago, I haven't heard that he's increased in value," he added sarcastically.

Haddon, who was observing Angie, saw the girl's wince of pain and the red going up to her forehead. "In love with the boy—too bad!" he thought.

"Family troubles drain a man's pocket sometimes," he remarked sententiously.

Angie fired up, her brown eyes glowing with almost the wine tint of Roddy's. She was one of those gentle obstinate creatures who fight to the last ditch for love.

"They haven't got any family troubles, Mr. Haddon," she said hotly. "They're very fond of Nancy and very proud of her; she's lovely, I've known her all my life—and—Roddy is doing well. Mrs. Gordon told me so herself."

"I'm not an outsider. I—you and papa don't tell me anything! What is it? Mama, you're wretched! Is it about Roddy?"

Mrs. Gordon looked at her blankly, absorbed in her own troubles. "Your father's just sold the house," she said weakly.

"Oh!" Nancy gave a sharp little cry of pain, rising to her feet. "I tried so hard to save you both from this, Mama. I did it all to prevent this—and it's been useless—useless!" she groaned.

Mrs. Gordon nodded her head sadly. "It wasn't any use, Nancy. You know how your father feels. He's paid back seven thousand already."

"To Richard?"

Mrs. Gordon raised her eyes reluctantly to her daughter's haggard face. "Yes, dear. He—your father would have it so. That leaves eight more to pay, and he—"

Nancy rose and stood quite still and straight, her white face set.

"Who bought the house?"

"Major Lomax."

Nancy's blue eyes widened. "He gave four thousand cash," her mother went on mechanically, "and there's three still on the mortgage. He—she hesitated and then added more cheerfully: "He's been kind, dear, he urged Papa not to sell the furniture. He said it wouldn't bring enough to make it worth while, and—he wants us to keep the house—to rent it from him."

"On father's salary? Why, Mama, there'll be one pinch after another! He—hasn't sold anything else, has he?" she added fearfully.

Her mother sighed. "He's selling all his securities except his life insurance. He hopes to net about two thousand more. That will be nine paid. But, oh, Nancy, I don't know where in the world he's going to get the other six thousand from!"

Nancy sank down on the lounge. "Mama, I never thought of it in that way," she faltered, "I had only the one thought to save Roddy from prison."

"Oh, Nancy, I don't see how you could do it! When I was your age—"

Mrs. Gordon stopped with her mouth open, for they both heard Amanda admitting a visitor.

Nancy listened, straining her ears. "It's Mrs. Haddon!" Nancy cried, springing up. "You see her. Mother, I—I will not!"

Mrs. Gordon looked aghast. She had never known Mrs. Kingdon well and she did not like her.

"She's come to see you, Nancy, I—"

Nancy pushed her shaking hands. "Go out there and talk to her—in the other room. Don't let her come in here!"

Mrs. Gordon, reluctant and embarrassed, allowed herself to be pushed. Nancy thrust her through the portieres, drew them behind her, and went back to her lounge. She meant to go upstairs but she actually felt faint and ill.

Bit by bit she became aware of voices. Now the words took shape and became sentences. It was Helena's voice, her full, soft, drawing voice.

"He's taking care of King; you know my husband clings to a doc-

bargain," Haddon exclaimed after a moment, "it was only just put on the market."

Lomax nodded. "Took it over the telephone before you came in," he said grimly.

Haddon reddened and then laughed.

"I concede the honors of war," he said ironically, making for the door.

Mrs. Gordon opened the old worn gate timidly, and approached the house with a hesitating, reluctant step. She was trying to realize that the place, which she had called home ever since Roddy was a baby, was no longer hers. She had just been down to the bank to sign the papers making over the house to Major Lomax, and her hand had trembled so that she had to apologize for her signature. She went into the house, feeling a little faint and giddy. She did not know there was anyone in the library; she went straight in and sank weakly into a chair, staring blankly at the sunshine in the old south window.

"In my Father's house are many mansions—" she whispered tremulously, unaware that she spoke aloud.

Nancy rose suddenly from the corner opposite. Her mother had not even seen her and the girl had been silenced by her first glimpse of Mrs. Gordon's face.

"Mama, what is it?" she cried, "tell me—even if I have done something—something dreadful. I'm not an outsider. I—you and papa don't tell me anything! What is it? Mama, you're wretched! Is it about Roddy?"

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Two New Advisers in the Treasury Department



WASHINGTON . . . Here are two new faces in the Treasury department whose appointments forecast Treasury activities. On the left, is Prof. Jacob Viner of the University of Chicago who has been appointed special adviser to Secretary Morgenthau of the Treasury, to assume his duties about April 1st. . . His duties, it is reported, will be to carry out an informal agreement between Great Britain and the U. S. to prevent wide fluctuations between the pound sterling and the dollar, pending final stabilization. On the right, is Tom K. Smith of St. Louis, who has taken over the duties of advising the Treasury on banks and banking problems.

CWA Workers Unearth Mastodon Skull



CHICAGO . . . CWA workers, while digging near Aurora, Ill., unearthed the skeleton head of a huge Mastodon, the extinct species which roamed the North American continent some 20,000 years ago. The head is 4 ft., 9 inches high and 2 ft., 10 inches wide and weighs 350 pounds. . . Prof. C. R. Smith of Aurora College, pictured above with mastodon skull, classifies the skull as a rare find.

tor!" she laughed softly. "He and Richard Morgan are great friends now; I'm glad of it for I was afraid he wouldn't like Richard. Men are such queer creatures. As a boy, Richard was so much in love with me he offered to fight King for trying to marry me!"

She paused and Mrs. Gordon mumbled something, an indistinct sentence or two, evidently bewildered. Nancy sat up straight now and listened, although she knew that Helena wanted her to listen.

"I cared for him, too, of course—who wouldn't? But my father—who you remember him, Mrs. Gordon?"

"I—I think so, yes, I do." Mrs. Gordon's tone showed confusion.

"He really insisted that I should marry Kingdon— I—well I broke my engagement and—" she laughed softly again, regretfully, "dear Mrs. Gordon, Richard felt it so much that I'm afraid sometimes—he'll never marry now. I really

do you hear from him?" she let her voice rest a moment and then, slowly drawing, "is he doing well?"

Nancy knew, without seeing it, the crimson flush that went up over her mother's face.

"Roddy's always done well. He's doing splendidly now."

"I'm so glad to hear it! Kingdon was asking about him yesterday. He knows someone in the trust company, I think, a Mr. Beaver, a cousin of Major Lomax."

Nancy started, trembling with apprehension. She remembered Roddy's description of old Beaver with his nose to the ground. Did his woman know?

TWELFTH INSTALLMENT
Then, either the visitor had found out all she wanted to, or she was tired of it; she was actually going. Nancy heard their movements in the hall. Mrs. Gordon came back, panting.

"Oh, Nancy, do you think she—she knows anything?"

Nancy shook her head doubtfully. "How can she? Unless— There was Beaver, but Nancy would not believe that. It was too much. "I think she only wanted you to talk about Richard."

Mrs. Gordon's face changed. "I didn't know that he—that they had ever been engaged," she said blankly. "Anyway, he's in love with you, Nancy, I know that!"

A strange smile twisted Nancy's lips. "Perhaps he isn't now," she said briefly, "perhaps he doesn't like a secret in the family—and I—" she laughed wildly—"I threw myself at his head, Mama."

"Oh, Nancy!" her mother blushed like a girl.

But Nancy did not blush, she turned suddenly white to the lips and caught at Mrs. Gordon's hand convulsively.

"There's Page Roemer coming in the gate—oh, Mama, what shall I do? What shall I do?" she cried.

Amanda's dusky face appeared at the door.

"Mist' Page Roemer, Miss Nancy," she said softly, showing the whites of her eyes, "I said mebbe yo' wa in an' agin mebbe yo' warn't but he's waitin', says he's gwinter wait till he sees yo' anyway, yes, m'm."

"That's all right, Mandy. I'll see Mr. Roemer."

Mrs. Gordon gave a little gasp and let the girl's hand slip. She was as eager to escape as Amanda. Left alone to face the inevitable, Nancy dreaded it. Now, fresh from the thought of Richard's repudiation, of Richard's rage at her fear of him, she must face Page.

"Come in here please, Page," she said faintly. But he heard it, and came into the library. As the sunlight struck his face, Nancy saw the wreck of it. Page had been suffering, too, and the sight of his haggard eyes wrung her with a pang sharper than her own self pity. They stood looking at each other dumbly for a moment. He was the first to recover himself enough to speak.

"I got your note," he said harshly. "I don't understand."

A deeper wave of crimson went up over Nancy's tremulous face and her eyes sank. She averted her face from Page's eyes, clasping her hands behind her back.

"I don't understand," Page repeated hoarsely. "What did you mean, Nancy?"

"What I said, my—my marriage is to be a secret."

"A secret?" there was a new note in his astonished voice. "Why?"

She recognized the note in it and she winced.

"I don't want it known—yet." He caught his breath. She didn't love Morgan, she wanted to hid her marriage—please God, he'd get her yet!

"Nancy, you don't love him! sorry you did it—you want to keep it a secret because you can't bear it! You—" he came nearer; suddenly he flung himself down beside her. "Nancy, you're not living with him—you're here—you're not actually his wife!" he gasped.

"No!" she cried passionately, "no, no!"

Exultation leaped into Roemer's face. He had suffered agonies of shame because Richard had taken her away from him that night!

"Nancy!" his feverish eyes searched her face, "answer me—have you ever been his wife—except in name?"

She drew a deep breath.

"No," she whispered to it, her head drooping, "never—never—I came home!"

Page gave a great gasp of joy. "God," he cried, "God, I'll take her away from him yet!"

The fury of his passion transformed him; his handsome smooth young face was furrowed—not with love but with hate, his hatred and his jealousy of Richard.

Nancy saw it; something in his very passion was selfish and cruel, it reached her; suddenly, shaken as she was, she thought of Richard. Would Page have spared her as Richard had?

"You mustn't say such things, Page," he said weakly, "and I—I mustn't hear them, I—" she could not finish her sentence.

He caught her hands almost roughly in his.

"Answer me," he gasped hoarsely; "tell me the truth—you don't love him—did you have to marry him Nancy?"

Page Roemer's look seemed to her only the mad passion of his love.

"Yes she answered faintly, not understanding, "I had to marry him, Page." She was too clean-souled to understand.

Richard would have known it, but Page dropped her hands and rose to his feet, tramping up and down the room like a madman. He had loved her, loved her deeply, and Richard had robbed him. Richard must have done what he

so. Yet—he drew an agonized breath, he couldn't give her up, he'd get her away from Richard



"You'll leave this house, sir. That's what you'll do."

would never have dared to do. She—God, was she worthless? He could not believe it, yet she said yet, damn him!

He—Page clenched his fist, he

Continued on page seven

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