

Out of Reach

Beatrice Redpath

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OUT OF REACH

BY BEATRICE REDPATH



Hartley Stevens was one of those who are cursed with a chronic dissatisfaction in possession. As a child it had been the toys in the shop windows that had cast a special glamour over his infant soul; the ones in his own nursery were tarnished by the fact of ownership. And it had persisted with him, he was completely conscious of it, but it was beyond his power to alter it, any more than he could have altered his blue black hair or his eyes, which had a curiously persuasive appeal for women. He spoke of it as a complex of his nature, unfortunate, but unalterable!

He had in fact, no understanding of those who were not the same. How should one continue to find satisfaction in possession? The very idea of possession suggested satiety. He could arrive at no conclusion but his own. The others, who felt differently, were only those who had become stupefied through living, dulled to the keener perceptions of the senses through animal content. He preferred not to be one of these browsed creatures.

He had known Dinah Manners for some years, known her when as Dinah Lawson he had met her repeatedly, but without particular notice. There was nothing to notice about her then. She had been a nice enough girl, but girls bored him. They always appeared to be summing up your possibilities as a prospective husband, and he had no thought of getting married. The French idea of keeping the girl safely in the background until she was married, appealed to him as one other countries might copy to advantage. He liked married women; they were safe.

But Dinah Manners, with the luxurious sense of the Manners' money as background, and the Manners' money to clothe her exquisitely, had become a personality not to be overlooked. She had needed the setting of good clothes, her beauty, if beauty it was, was not of the kind to go unadorned. Perhaps it was not beauty at all, for before she had been married he had never noticed any signs of particular good looks. But now it was perfectly evident to anyone with discriminating taste, that she was exceptionally pleasant to look upon. There was a finished perfection about her that

pleased. But it was not so much this that counted with Hartley Stevens, it was the fact that she was out of reach!

He met her one afternoon at a crowded musicale, and he had persuaded her to let him steer her out into the open air, away from the overheated rooms. There was time for a walk in the park. Why waste time and make demands on one's good temper, by being jostled about, and having to speak to people one would ordinarily avoid? And she acquiesced, with a shyness that he found very attractive.

The half dusk enclosed them in an isolation that was conducive to confidences. Before them rose the battlements of skyscrapers, floating and nebulous now, their solidity replaced by lines of light. An electric sign with winking persistence was proclaiming the virtue of its merchandise to the first faint flicker of stars. Its shrieking vulgarity was incongruous, incompatible, with the beauty of the shadowy park. The giant reservoir, like a small lake, lay to the right of them, the lights from the buildings back of it like serpents of chased gold wriggling across the water. An occasional limousine passed stealthily, its white glare of light making fantastic the skeleton trees.

She was wistful, subdued, as their conversation dropped from the lightness of laughter to a semi-seriousness of tone.

"Life is such a delusion," she said with a sudden wistfulness and Hartley Stevens imagined that she should have substituted marriage where she spoke of life, "it holds out such promises, but they are dead sea fruit."

"You are young to have come to that conclusion," he said, "I don't know. I find life worth while. As long as there is always something just beyond our reach. That seems to me the whole solution of it."

She looked ahead thoughtfully. He could smell the fragrance from a bunch of violets that she wore. He was interested in her, and he liked her profile outlined clearly by the black water beside them, it indicated character, a strength beneath her apparent tranquillity. The whiteness of her throat had the quality of ivory.

"I suppose so," she responded doubtfully, "and what we grasp crumbles to ashes?" Her tone was raised interrogatively.

"I've always found it so," he answered.

He was wondering what was the disillusionment that lay back of her words. He knew David Manners as a man some ten years older than himself, cold, self-contained, and extremely egotistical. Prone to imagine that he was

the man of most consequence in the room at any time, and that his verdict should settle any discussion. He was respected for his business capacity as much as he was disliked for his personality. He could well imagine how he would dampen any young ardour of loving, if it was love that was the foundation of her marriage, and not money as most people supposed. He too had previously summed it up as a marriage for money, but speaking to her now it was difficult to believe so. She was very young, nearly twenty years younger than the man she had married. He could see how the man of forty would dazzle her, she would mistake his air of consequence for power, and take pride in what later became a bore. And with what young ardour she would come to marriage. Her romanticism would weave for any man she married a garment with which to cloak his faults, while she would build on any good points he possessed, till her structure would overtop her vision. But his final cold acceptance of her ardour would be as water poured on flame.

He could fancy what had prompted her remark about life, and he was sorry for her in her young disillusionment. What a gamble marriage was! He was content to think that he would never be fool enough to be lured into it. All around him he could see his friends paying the several prices of their folly; he was thankful not to be one of them.

Rather diffidently, as he left her at her door, she asked him to come in to tea some afternoon. She was usually at home and she would be glad to see him. He accepted with an alacrity that brought a glow of pleasure into her face.

And he found it very pleasant at the end of an afternoon to drop in at her house on his way up town. She was a good listener and appeared interested in most things. He liked to talk when he knew each word was valued. He felt a pleasant sense of well being, beside her fire, the tea table between them, and the long pleasant room behind him, low in key, a background and not an obtrusion. She was as a piece of delicately wrought ivory, he thought, in a sombre case, that heightened by contrast the smooth precision of her corn-coloured hair, the small oval of her face. They sustained the note of friendliness, it was comradeship, but comradeship between a man and a woman. There was always the sense that something else might lie behind the shield. Neither of them probed to find out, he preferred to balance on the threshold, and with her the intimate pleasure of their friendship sufficed. To lose it would mean disaster. She was afraid to lose what she had found, lest her loneliness should encompass her again.

Several times David Manners came in and joined them for a few moments while he took a cup of tea, before going for his usual ride in the park. He appeared to Hartley Stevens as smug and self-satisfied. His manner towards his wife showed how sure he felt of her affections, he had no hint or suspicion of her fancy ever wandering. When he was in the foreground he occupied it completely, there was no room for any intruder. His manner was as one who allows himself to be admired, he would not notice in his complete self-occupation, that there was any lessening in worship.

“I’m glad that you can find time to come in and see Dinah,” he remarked with a shade of patronage in his manner, “she’s too much alone. She should go out more. Plenty of exercise makes a normal mind. I’ve always taken plenty myself,” he said, thrusting back his shoulders with an air of satisfaction, as though exhibiting himself as a fine example of good habits.

Hartley Stevens regarded him calmly. He wondered how she could ever have married him, but he remembered how young she had been. He noticed her constraint when he was in the room, a forced amiability that was unnatural to her. She made a conscious effort to please, because her will went so far in the opposite direction. And yet he was undoubtedly kind, generous, a good husband. But all his good qualities went for nothing beside the exasperating quality of his egotism. Everything he did and said was shadowed by it. It tarnished the lustre of any kindness.

“There’s that Directors’ dinner to-night my dear,” he said pausing as he left the room, “I won’t be in until late.”

The atmosphere of constraint vanished as soon as the curtains fell together behind him. Hartley Stevens wondered as he looked at her, sitting with her face half averted, what was in her mind. For the first time he was conscious of something different in his own, and he fancied that he was communicating it to her. He rose and stood leaning against the mantle shelf, one hand in his pocket, while he looked at her reflectively. He liked her immobility, her hands were linked ivory against the black velvet of her dress. It gave him the sense of something held in reserve, a useless expenditure of energy was an irritation and an annoyance. So few can attain the art of sitting motionless.

He spoke on a sudden impulse. “Don’t sit alone here all evening. Come out and have dinner. We’ll go to a theatre.”

She looked up quickly, half in doubt, hesitating perceptibly for a moment, and then smiled, frankly pleased.

“That would be nice,” she said, “David hates theatres, I haven’t been to one for ages.”

The evening had been a success, he had made every effort to have it so. They had dined at a restaurant, and the music, the flowers and lights had imbued them with a sense of gaiety, of *joie de vivre*. He had never seen her like this, eager to be amused, meeting laughter half way. Beside her own fire she was more meditatively serious, to-night she was irresponsibly glad to be alive. He was immensely attracted to her. Later they had gone to see “Marriage”, and had laughed together over the biting Shavian wit. It had pleased her by its subtleties, and he had joined in her laughter.

“But there is a kernel of truth that lies hidden in all he says. It is not all just sarcasm and fun,” she said thoughtfully, as she leaned back in the taxi on the way home, in a foam of white tulle. But he was impatient of words, and had no interest at that moment in meditating on the philosophy of it.

“Marriage . . . marriage is of no account,” he said quickly, “this is what counts,” and though she was startled she did not resist. She even responded with a sudden uncontrolled emotion.

The taxi stopped with a sudden jar and he followed her up the steps in silence; as the door opened to let her in he said a brief good-night.

The old sense of comradeship could not return. They could not retrace, it was an impossibility to go backwards. At times he pondered over her intensity; although he was immensely attracted to her, he preferred to keep affairs like these away from deep waters. He disliked turbulent scenes, raw emotion; she was not one to give way to such, but still she was a trifle too intense, a trifle too young to the way of it. She was altogether charming, and her firelit room with the wide shadowed spaces held an insistent appeal for him. Well-worn words were new to her, she was unused to the usage of them. And she was utterly lonely in her life. She did not speak of her husband, for she was conscious of the loyalty her position demanded.

She would listen with a characteristic earnestness as he said the words that came to him so easily, he did not care to remember that it was because of oft repetition. And in a manner she was different from the others; he had no desire to destroy a certain aloofness in her that was part of her charm. He was satisfied as things were; the borderland had always held a distinct pleasure for him, he had so often stepped over and found disenchantment.

“There is no other way but to laugh and be gay,” he said holding both her hands in his, “any other way leads to quicksands and remorse. I want to

keep you as you are. Let the fires we light be not the ones that burn to ashes. There is too much of sympathy and understanding between us to let us risk destroying it. Let us build up something finer and more lasting. Comrades aren't we?" he said, kissing her in a manner that denied his words.

He thought his renunciation of what he could have had so easily was very commendable. "It must be everything or nothing," he added, pulling her down on the sofa beside him, "and since it can't be everything, it must be nothing. But we can be everything to each other in a rather fine way," and she assented to all he said, because there seemed nothing else to be said.

He was pleased that he had saved her from pitfalls that might have led her down pathways to deep remorse. He considered that he had done something quite heroic. She was a trifle too intense for the everyday current of life, things appeared to go deep. He cautioned her about other men, he would teach her that she must never step over the threshold. She was not the kind to do so without disastrous results. And she listened to it all only half heeding; her attention wandered when he gave her such advice, and she waited for his next caress.

He was entirely satisfied with the course that he had taken. He had so very nearly gone further, but he was afraid of her intensity. It would not have passed lightly over, and emotional scenes wearied him. He saw plainly that she cared for him more than he wished, but she was married, they could be good friends, that was all. But he continued to see a great deal of her, it had become a habit to drop in on his way up town, a habit that he had no desire to break, though occasionally it appeared that it would be the wiser course to follow. At times he thought her radiantly pretty, and she was always interested gay or thoughtful, following the track of his mood. He felt too that there was depth to her, she was expanding beneath their friendship; he felt a growth, a change and development since he had first met her. If things had been different, if she had been free, and if he had ever contemplated marriage at all, he fancied that she would have been the wife he would have chosen. He could not imagine anyone who would better meet his demands. She had all the qualities that he required and much more besides. It was a pity that she was married to such an egotistical beast, but marriage after all, what did it count? She could have her friends and make her own life. He was surely showing her how to do so. He would make every effort to do all that he could for her, for he was really fond of her, and he was so content with the way that he had taken.

He urged her to go out more, to see more people; her life which was so secluded increased her intensity about all that came near to her. He would

lessen that trait in her. “It is best to take things lightly,” he explained to her continually.

But she was much alone. David Manners seemed to live his life entirely outside of his own home. Hartley Stevens imagined from an occasional remark from her that there was a chill of constraint growing up between them, and from what he heard from outside sources that not finding the wealth of admiration he demanded in his own home he was seeking it elsewhere. She was too honest to be able to disguise her feelings, her very effort would be apparent that it was effort. Well, all the better, it would leave her freer to choose her own friends.

He was so sure that he had placed their friendship on a firm basis; he congratulated himself with a sense of secret satisfaction that he had done so. He had not often denied himself the fruit that was ripe to his hand. He felt that he had done something quite splendid. He did not take into consideration that he had taken this way in reality because of his avoidance on principal of deep waters. He was therefore quite unprepared for her emotional outbreak.

“I can’t, I simply can’t go on with it,” she burst out, the words gaining force from long suppression, “I can’t go on living with a man I detest. Don’t you see how impossible it is?”

She had put down her cup of tea untasted. He had dropped in to see her according to his custom. The lights had not yet been lit, only the firelight flickered across the room, picking out points of colour to accentuate, or sparks of light from a piece of brass or copper, in the low-toned setting of the room. As she looked at him her clear amber eyes were question points of light. Her look was an appeal for help.

He did not answer immediately for he felt as though he had no response to make. The little chill of self-possession that he had always felt in her was gone; flame burned within the ivory, he saw the glow of it in her face.

“Oh, take me away from it,” she said, her voice low and breathless. “If you care as you say you do you can’t let me go on like this.”

He felt a need of diplomacy, he spoke carefully, choosing his words.

“How can I?” he asked, “when I know so well what it would mean. Won’t you trust me when I tell you it is impossible. If you were free, oh, my dear, if you were free, do you think I’d hesitate. But as things are it is impossible. I know you so well, just how sensitive you are, and just what it would mean for you. I know, oh believe me when I say I know! I am so

much older than you, so much wiser in the way of the world . . . I know about such things. It would be unhappiness for you first and foremost. I'm sure of it or I would not hesitate. I know how hard it must be . . . do you think I don't know, and don't admire you correspondingly? It is just that. . . . I admire you too much besides loving you, to let you do such a thing. My dear, if it wasn't you I was thinking of I'd take you away this instant. Oh, you know that!"

But she remained unconvinced. She sat upright in her chair, her hands on either arm, looking away from him into the shadows. He could see from her expression that he had not brought her around to his view of it. Her chin was tilted with a suggestion of defiance. She was the kind that appeared so easily persuasive on the surface, but whose determination was backed with steel. It was her youth, her extreme youth and spirit of romanticism that made her consider such things were possible. You do not run off with another man's wife in a cold-blooded fashion like this. Such things were undoubtedly done, but he had always experienced a tolerant pity for any who were foolish enough to do so. They inevitably found themselves in a more uncomfortable position than formerly. There were the Holton Derwents . . . he knew for a fact that they had been regretting the step they had taken ever since; they were as bored with each other as they had been formerly dissatisfied. People eyed them askance and left them alone, and who wants to be left alone after the first great ardour has died? But he could not explain it to her in this way, she was too young, too romantic. He came over and sat on the arm of her chair and touched her hair lightly.

"If you were free, my dear," he said, "but, oh, I know what is best for you. I couldn't do a thing that I was sure would bring you unhappiness, however much I might want it. Don't you suppose it's hard for me too . . . My dear, you don't know. But I would rather suffer than see you led into greater unhappiness. One must look at all sides of it. Oh, I know . . . I know!"

"Then," she said a trifle wearily in her acceptance of it, "life is to go on like this for always. Other people have taken their happiness; why can't we?" "Oh," she added, white faced and quivering, "I can't bear it."

Assiduously he tried to make her see his way of it, interlarding the hardness of the facts with a tenderness that appeased, and softened her stark determination for a vital break from such conditions. But he left her a little puzzled himself, a trifle perplexed at the course of things. He had never wished to do other than skim the surfaces. That had been the rule that he had held to, and he wished for no infringement of that rule. He had always

passed by the depths where tragedy lurked with a careless shrug, depth of emotion was a bore! If she were older she would have learned that lesson, her youth was too impetuous; she would strive with her insufficient young hands to stem the tides, to turn them aside to her own pleasure, but he was not so foolish as to think it possible, or even desirable. He concluded after some thought that a business trip that had been hanging over for some time would be of inestimable value just at present. That was it. In a month's time things would have become more settled, they would have regained a normal balance.

But she in her innocency was to frustrate his motives of the least possible disturbance. He saw the next afternoon as soon as he came into the room, that something had restored her; something had occurred either within her mind or outside of it, to give her a clearer vision. The restless flood of her emotion was arrested or spent; he felt a mental equilibrium that satisfied him that his hurried business trip was perhaps unnecessary. This was in the first moments, for suddenly she made the announcement casually which was to so upset all his preconceived ideas.

“He is going to give me a divorce,” she said with the utmost calm.

His amazement left him without words. He looked at her in startled interrogation while she continued quietly.

“It appears that he is in love with another woman, has been for some time. He came in last night and saw that I had been crying . . . and I told him the truth. He was very cold, very concise. He said he would be entirely satisfied to let me be free. That he would give me ample proofs. He was quite calm about it. He agrees with me that it would be best to have it arranged as soon as possible. I saw my lawyer this morning.” She paused, she hesitated and faced him, searching his face which he had effectively masked for the moment, “And so,” she added, “I will be free!”

Yes, that was the bomb shell. She would most certainly be free. Hartley Stevens strove in that moment to collect his thoughts. It had come so simply, so suddenly, without any scene, any disturbance. That would be her way; she was opposed to scenes. He felt that he was not rising to what the situation demanded of him, but he did not know what to say under the circumstances. He felt no corresponding elation at the idea of her freedom. He objected to divorces, but he was not narrow-minded enough to lay particular stress on that point. No, the main fact was otherwise, but it lay half dormant in his sub-consciousness . . . the bars were down . . . she was no longer out of reach.

“Yes,” he said thoughtfully, “you will be free. Some way I can’t connect you with a divorce. I’ve always held you so aloof from the tangible realities. You seemed a dream person, shut away in this big room, with the firelight and the shadows, from all the outside glaring actualities. I liked to think of you so. That none of the sordid, everydayness of life could touch you. No, I can’t connect you with divorce, its not you somehow. You are a dream person, you must not be soiled from contact with the world. Oh my dear, I don’t know how I feel about it. Of course you will be free, but it’s at a price.”

He felt that he was talking so as to allow himself time to think, to consider. Words came to him as a cloak to cover up the uncomfortable moment, for he frankly admitted to himself that it was uncomfortable. He could still postpone the moment when he must appear definitely glad. When he must fully consider the fact of her freedom. For the present it was allowable that the remaining circumstances should occupy him. He must hide from her his inner consternation. But even so there was a tinge of surprise in her voice, a note of condemnation for his words.

“You think then that it was not sordid, the life I have been living? You may have built up your fancies about me, but they were unreal. You did not face the actual reality of it. To be free . . . to me it is like coming out from a noisome place where I have been stifling.”

“Oh, I know my dear, I know what it must mean. It is the publicity I hate for you. Caring as I do you must understand my distaste for it.”

There was no doubt whatever that he was greatly disturbed. The more he considered it the more he wished to push the whole idea of it away from him. There was only one apparently natural or possible outcome to the whole affair, and he had no desire for it. But the divorce would take some time to be arranged, and meanwhile the business trip abroad that he had planned would come in even more opportunely than he had been previously aware of. It was the only way out of a difficult situation. He thought it over carefully that day after he had left her and decided to explain to her that it would be better for everyone concerned, were he not in New York at the time.

And she was sensible enough to see it in the same light. She told him that she quite agreed with him.

“I think I would be much happier if you were away,” she said, “for feel as you do about it, it would be easier for me to go through with it while you weren’t here.”

He was relieved that she took such a sane view of it, and once on the steamer he tried very successfully to put all thoughts of it away from him. It was sufficient to live in the present, life is too full of surprises to take any thought for the future.

The letters he received from her were frankly herself. She had never obtruded her affairs upon him, and now as usual she placed them in the background, merely mentioning casually that the divorce was going through. She hoped that he was enjoying himself as well as doing business, and she advised him not to hurry back. New York was not pleasant at this time of year, cold wet winds were their daily fare.

And he delayed. He had not taken a holiday for some time and he felt that he owed himself one. Also in London he met an American woman whom he found charming. She was returning in a short time herself to join her husband in America, and she was nervous about travelling in war time. What more natural than that he should wait over for her? It seemed in fact the only courteous thing to do.

He had quite made up his mind that his marriage with Dinah Manners would take place shortly after his return. He was not exactly adverse to it, but neither did he feel any enthusiasm. But he had led her to believe that his one desire was to marry her if only she were free. There had been no hypocrisy in it at the time, he had really thought that he had meant it. But then there did not appear to be any possibility of such an occurrence. Now that she was free, the desire had fled, that was all. It was the old fact that had followed him through life, the fruit on the lower branches was without flavour; it was only that which was out of reach that tempted him. But he would go through with it. He was not a cad, and no doubt he would be as content as most.

Meanwhile the trip was all that was pleasant. Mrs. Hazen was vivacious and gay, she was also well learned in the game, her arts rivalled his; there was no fear here of emotional depths. She skimmed the surfaces as lightly as he could have desired, culling her pleasure but steering clear of the reefs. She was a delightful companion for an ocean trip, good looking in a rather obvious way, with bronze hair and a figure that showed to advantage on a windswept deck. He was exceedingly sorry when the trip was over, and made plans to see more of her on landing; he would see her the next afternoon at her hotel. Meanwhile it scarcely seemed worth while to let Dinah know that he was back. He would be so busy that he would not have time to see her for a few days.

And Mrs. Hazen's charms were none the less apparent in the tea-room of her hotel. She seemed to make the other women in the room pale into insignificance. She had an air of being well aware of her own value, and she impressed her value upon you till you began to accept it as authentic. Hartley Stevens admitted to himself that he had rarely met a woman whom he admired as much. He was in the midst of a flattering remark when he chanced to lift his eyes to the table directly across from them, to meet Dinah Manners's cool quiet gaze fixed upon him. He started visibly. She bowed and smiled, and as he came across to her table, she gave him her hand in her usual half shy, half friendly manner. She was sitting with an older woman whom she introduced as her aunt. He felt himself stumbling over his words in a manner that irritated him, but she helped him out by taking upon herself the burden of the conversation. To his question of when he could see her she appeared to exhibit a very spontaneous and natural regret.

"I'm so sorry," she said, her clear eyes on his face, "but I'm leaving for the south to-morrow. I've had so many colds. It's been a dreadful winter. The doctor wants me to go away till the warm weather comes," and she gave him her address at a hotel in Florida.

There was no disguising the fact that he was relieved. He would be very much occupied with a number of affairs, and by the time she returned they could arrange matters far more comfortably. He disliked undue haste in anything; besides he found her looking pale and tired. It may have been in contrast to Mrs. Hazen's striking appearance, but undoubtedly a couple of months in the south would do her good. He had no chance to ask her for any particulars about the divorce as he would have liked to have done; she was leaving the following day at an early hour, and that night she was dining with some friends. He sent her a great bunch of roses with an affectionate note, and felt that he had thus fully atoned for his sin of omission in neglecting to let her know of his arrival. He was pleased that she had shown no hurt feelings, and liked her the better for it. He disliked women who adopted a grievance because of neglect. Undoubtedly if one wished to marry one could not find a more satisfactory wife than Dinah Manners. If one wished to marry . . . ah that was it!

The following months went rapidly. Mrs. Hazen remained in New York and he saw a great deal of her. He would make the most of it while it lasted. He wrote to Dinah to the address she had given him and she wrote briefly in return. Her letter was the essence of friendliness, it touched on matters of common interest, it left him with a sense of pleasant friendship. He wrote an answer in the same vein and then did not hear from her for some time. The

weeks went quickly and occasionally he wondered that she did not return sooner from her trip. But he had much to take up his attention, and he did not have time for conjectures.

So he was completely astonished in his turn to meet her one afternoon coming down the Avenue. It was a day redolent with spring. The tops of the 'buses were crammed with humanity, swarming up into the sunshine, while the tall buildings seemed to be drinking in the sun till they shone, whitely splendid. At the more crowded corners the boys were out with trays heavy with violets and starry camelias. Children rolled their hoops in the parks with shrill cries of joy. Everything was alive, pulsating with the spring. She seemed also to emit the same radiance, he had never seen her looking better was his thought as she stopped to shake hands with him, smiling and friendly.

“Where am I living?” she repeated after him, with a curiously quizzical expression, “you don’t know then, that I was married to Vincent Fane three weeks ago?”

He stared at her unbelieving. She had the same manner of announcing an overwhelming fact as though it was completely unimportant. And this was a thunder clap! He had imagined himself almost married to her, but now he was looking at her without listening to what she was saying. He was striving to diagnose the state of his feelings, while she talked on unconcernedly. At one time he would have imagined that he might have felt relieved at such a piece of news. But he felt curiously defrauded! Her charm as she stood there enveloped him. She had raised the bars between them again, and she was unapproachable . . . she was out of reach!

She did not appear to be unhappy, and he knew her well enough to know that she would not have married unless she had cared. It had not been just to step gracefully out of a situation that threatened to become embarrassing, that she had married Vincent Fane. She had made some mistakes, but this was not one of them. He continued to stare at her with a slight frown, answering her questions without thought, for he was engrossed with the fact of how greatly she was to be desired.

And for the first time, running like an undercurrent beneath his thoughts he felt a distinct distaste for this complex of his nature, this permanent dissatisfaction in possession!

THE END

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *Out of Reach* by Beatrice Redpath]