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## The Old Marquis

### The Girl of the Cloisters

CHAPTER XXXIII.  
"WHAT FOOLS ARE MEN."

But though Lord Edgar did not come, the marquis heard of him; the sporting columns of the newspapers were full of him, and he had the satisfaction of reading each morning an account of the condition of the horse Assassin, which Lord Edgar was to ride in the gentleman's race at Badmore. The papers went into the minutest particulars, not confined to the horse, but extending to Lord Edgar himself. They wrote—newspapers nowadays are not respectful of persons by any means!—that Lord Edgar was considered to be in splendid condition, that his well-known courage and nerve, which had been tested and proved before this, were still in his possession, and that if Assassin could be managed Lord Edgar was the man to manage it.

Every morning the marquis turned to the sporting news, and read that carefully before he looked at the other parts of paper. He read a full description of the horse in which the writers dilated with evident gusto upon its evil temper and irritability, and hinted pretty plainly that whoever rode him—be it Lord Edgar or any one else—rode with his life in his hands, and was so likely to lose it as to keep it. Often the marquis dropped the newspapers with a smothered curse.

Was it for this that he had prevented Lord Edgar's marriage with Temple's granddaughter—that he should lose his life, break his neck on a race-course?

When he reflected that if anything happened to Edgar, the man he hated, Clifford Revel, would be the next marquis, he grew white-hot and mad with rage.

Why did he not write to Lord Edgar and beg or command him not to ride? "Simply because he knew that it would be useless, that, having given his word to ride, this evil-tempered beast, Lord Edgar would keep that word, though the gallop would carry him to the grave.

"This morning he sat with the Times upon his knee, and one or two morning papers at his feet, pondering and thinking.

"He will be killed," he murmured; "I feel it—I have a feeling of certainty that he will be killed—he, the last of the Farintoshes, and that whited sep-

## And the Worst is Yet to Come



marquis, with a terrible frown, and in a voice which made Mr. Palmer tremble. "You will do nothing of the sort, sir! On the contrary, you will take this message to the groom at the stables—that he is to receive any number of horses my Lord Edgar chooses to send down, and that if the stables will not hold them, he is to consult with the architect and build others to receive them."

"Yes, my lord," asserted Mr. Palmer, wondering what had happened to work this change in his master's mood.

"At the same time it would be well if you succeeded in realizing the fact that my Lord Edgar will be master here presently, and that if you wish to retain your situation and a whole skin on your body, you will study his wishes and interests!"

"Yes, my lord," murmured Mr. Palmer, humbly.

"Good! Go then and give orders that I shall want four horses to take me to the Badmore races."

Mr. Palmer stared, and his face fell. The Marquis going to the Badmore races! He, who had not been seen at a race for the last twenty years!

"Palmer," said the marquis, with a smile that was more terrible and threatening than any frown, "I have noticed of late that you have grown either hard of hearing or intensely stupid. Whichever may be the defect under which you are laboring, it will prove a sufficient reason for leaving my services, I fear."

"I heard you, my lord," said Mr. Palmer, abjectly. "Four horses. I think you said, my lord."

"Four, not fourteen, nor forty!" retorted the marquis. "Let the carriage be aired, and see that no notice is sent to the newspapers; you understand me! I do not choose that all the world should know what I intend doing."

"I understand, my lord."

"Good, you may go," and Mr. Palmer, more awed and amazed than he had been for some months, stole out.

CHAPTER XXXIII.  
DANGER AHEAD.

The day before the Badmore races arrived, and Lord Edgar, who had regarded the whole affair from the first with much distaste, now actually hated to hear the names of Badmore or of Assassin mentioned.

For he had not yet told Lela that he would be obliged to leave her.

He did not intend to tell her that he was going to ride in a race, because he knew the anguish and dread it would cost her; he intended to go down to Badmore in the afternoon, stay the night, ride, and win or lose the race, and return the next day, without her knowing the business which had taken him from her side. He would tell her afterward, of course, and while telling her would rejoice in being able to add that it was the last race he would ever ride.

And now that the evening had arrived when he must leave her, he put off the evil moment as long as he possibly could.

He heard her singing about the rooms as she made pretense of using the dusting-brush which she had insisted upon buying; he saw her lovely face lighted up with quiet happiness, and his heart ached. But it could not be put off any longer.

"Lela," he said, with a little cough, and shaking of the heart, as they sat after lunch, she on the rug at his feet, he in the arm-chair with a cigarette, "I've something unpleasant to say to you, my darling."

"Unpleasant!" she echoed, but looking up at him with a fearless smile, which fled at the sight of his troubled face.

"Yes, dearest," he said, his hand resting on her head. "I ought to have told you before, but I have put it off because I hate and loathe the idea of giving you pain!"

"Ah, Edgar, what is it?" she faltered.

"Now don't be alarmed! It's nothing to be alarmed at!" he said, mentally confounding his awkwardness. Why could he not learn something of the fact which Clifford Revel possessed? "Nothing in the slightest dear. It's only that I shall be obliged to leave you for a few hours!"

"Leave me for a few hours!" she repeated, turning pale, and fixing her eyes upon him with a painful surprise. "Yes," he said, trying to smile. "Only for a few hours, dearest. Come don't look like that! I am not going to America."

She smiled, and tried to efface the pain and trouble from her face. "But where are you going?" she asked.

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"Now that," he said, "is what I can't tell you."

"You can not tell me, Edgar?" she said, but not complaining, only with a quiet astonishment.

"No," he said, biting his lip. "I don't want to tell you—not that it is anything I am ashamed of. I'm not going on a house-breaking expedition," and he tried to laugh.

She shook her head.

"Why do you tell me that?" she said, with quiet gravity.

"No, just so," he said. "And I am going to try your love for and your trust in me."

"Go on," she said, with a long breath.

"I shall be obliged to start on this business, which I can not tell you about this afternoon, and I shall not be home until to-morrow evening."

She started slightly, and he saw her lips quiver, but she smiled heroically.

"So long!" she murmured, and there was something in the tone in which she spoke the words that made him almost wish he had been dumb before he, yielding to Clifford Revel's persuasions, had promised to ride Assassin.

"It is not so very long, dearest!" he said, reassuringly. "It seems long to you, because I have not left you for more than one hour or two since we were married."

"Lela, if you knew how I loathe this—this business which takes me from you, you would understand how much it costs me to leave you!"

"Yes, yes!" she said, eagerly, almost piteously. "I am unreasonable and exacting, Edgar; don't notice my reluctance to let you go. Think it is childish, as it is—as it is! Say something not harsh, ah, not harsh, but sensible! Who am I that I should question your coming and going?"

"You are my wife, my love, my darling, my queen!" he said, passionately, "and if I do not tell you the whole of the business that calls me away, you will know, Lela, that I do it for your sake!"

"For my sake! Then"—quickly, and turning pale again—"then it is unpleasant business, or—ah, no, Edgar!—there is danger!" and she grasped his arm with a piteous look in her eyes.

He laughed, as he soothed her, and said, as he thought truthfully, for he was not afraid of Assassin and thought nothing of the newspaper men:

"There is no danger, Lela, be assured of that! I shall come back to you to-morrow, and then we can laugh over your fears."

"Come back to-morrow, but I shall not laugh," she said, gravely. "And—am—are you going alone, Edgar?" she asked calmly, without any significance in the question.

"No," he said; "Clifford is going with me."

"Clifford Revel," she said, and once again the spasm of fear seized her.

"Yes; so you see that I shall be quite safe," and he laughed.

"Yes," she murmured, but without much heartiness.

(To be Continued.)

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LONDON, May 26th, 1919.

THE SEASON AT COURT.

Since the return of the Court to Buckingham Palace, London, the King has been considering what entertaining shall take place here during the remainder of the London season. It has been arranged that there shall be one evening Court at Buckingham Palace towards the end of June for the reception of the Official and diplomatic circles, but this is likely to be the only function of this kind before the early spring of next year. There is also possibility that a garden party will be held at Buckingham Palace, to which a very large number of guests will be invited, and this is likely to be all the entertaining that will take place at Buckingham Palace this year. The evening Court will be especially interesting from the fact that three of their Majesties' children—the Prince of Wales, Princess Mary, and Prince Albert—will be making their first appearance at a ceremony of this nature.

THE PRINCE AND THE THISTLE

Now that it has been decided that the Prince of Wales shall visit Canada during the autumn his projected visit to Scotland will perforce have to be postponed until next year. This being the case, it is highly probable that King George will confer the Order of the Thistle upon His Royal Highness in the forthcoming birthday honors, and that the formal charter of the Order will be presented to the Prince at St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, which will be abandoned, it is stated, however, that before His Royal Highness leaves for Canada he shall have become a Knight of both the Thistle and St. Patrick, so that he will then possess the three principal Orders.

SIR DAVID BEATTY.

They say in Whitehall that we must not be uneasy about the renewed stories of Sir David Beatty's anxiety to replace Sir Rosslyn Wemyss as First Sea Lord, nor about the suggestion that Lloyd George on returning to town will at once see that he does so. Sir David, it is said, is actually unemployed, because he wishes and has earned a holiday, which he is now taking in the Mediterranean. A naval officer, however, gives me another version as the current gossip. Sir David, he says, had a definite verbal offer from Sir Eric Geddes, then First Lord, who invited him to join the Board of Admiralty as First Sea Lord, on hauling down his flag at Rosyth. Sir Rosslyn Wemyss was to make way for Sir David Beatty by going to the Mediterranean as Governor of Malta. When the Grand Fleet was broken up, however, Sir Eric Geddes had left the Admiralty to take charge of the Transport Bill, and Mr. Long had reigned in his stead. Walter Long, in change, no need to hurry the inevitable, nor did Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who still has plans of his own for the service. Moreover, Mr. Churchill, another masterful Minister, claimed Malta for General Sir Herbert Plumer, so that Sir David Beatty decided to take a holiday (so at least the story runs.)

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