



**WHEN LOVE Came Too Late.**

CHAPTER XXI  
The Avenger.

"Handsome ticker—jeweled back. You always were fond of that kind of thing. I've lost mine." She slipped the watch into her waistband and smiled, and Mr. Bartley Bradstone bore the appropriation of his property without a protest.

"So you won't come?" she said. "Very well. But you haven't done with me yet; don't flatter yourself I'm going to let you off so easy! Let me see; I'm going to stay here till to-morrow night, just for change of air," and she laughed. "Meet me here at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon."

He started, and his face reddened. "That's impossible, Bella," he said, quickly. "I've got an—important engagement."

"Oh! you've got an—important—engagement, have you?" she said, with slow contempt; "then you'll have to put your important engagement off for one more important still."

The sweat started on his forehead, and he wiped it away covertly.

"Don't be absurd, Bella," he said, with a sickly smile. "I tell you I can't meet you to-morrow—not at that time. I'll meet you at night, or the next day."

"No you won't; to-morrow night I shall be gone. Four o'clock in the afternoon, please; and you may as well bring a few notes with you—say for a hundred. I'm rather short just now."

He affected consternation. "A hundred pounds! You must think I'm made of money! Well, you shall have it, for—the sake of old times. But you needn't trouble to come for it, Bella. I'll send it to you here."

She smiled. "No, you won't. I've a fancy for making you bring it—just for the sake of old times! You seem very disinclined to meet me to-morrow; what's your reason, I wonder?" and she eyed him suspiciously.

The lids of his downcast eyes quivered. "There can't be much pleasure in our meetings now," he said. "I don't care to be reminded of the past; you must feel that. Look here, you shall have the money. I'll make it a hun-

drad and fifty, though I can't very well spare it, but only on condition that you let me send it to you."

She shook her head, and, with a laugh, caught at a branch of the tree with one hand and drew herself up, hanging for a moment gracefully motionless, then dropped like a feather to the ground, and kissed her hand to him.

"No, I'll have my way. Bring it here to-morrow at four o'clock, or—I'll go with you now! I'm not exactly in evening dress; but you can explain—you're good at explaining, you know."

His face paled, and his breath came fast for a moment, as he thought of this woman with her cigarette in her mouth, her stage smile, and loud, defiant voice, accompanying him into the pure presence of Olivia; then he nodded.

"Very well," he said, sullenly. "I'll come. And now I must be going."

He put out his hand for his watch, and she laughed mockingly. "I'll tell you the time," she said. "No, I can't see. Off with you. Remember, four o'clock, and you can make it the extra fifty. Here! wait! give me the rest of those cigarettes."

He held out the silver case, and she was about to pick out the cigarettes, then looked up at him exasperatingly, and put the case in her pocket.

"Perhaps I'll give it back to you to-morrow, perhaps I won't. Good-night," and with a nod she motioned him to go on.

She stood looking after him for a few minutes, puffing at the cigarette, and thinking with half-closed eyes, very much like a lithe, graceful cat.

"I wonder what your little game is down here, Master Bartley," she muttered. "No good, I'll bet. You never did anything but mischief wherever you went. Well, it doesn't matter to me. So long as you keep up my allowance and yourself quiet you may do what you please."

Then she pinned her shawl round her, and, walking quickly out of the wood, went down the lane, and stopped in front of The Dell.

"This ought to be the place," she said. "Yes, it's like him to choose a place like this. I should die of the doldrums in a week. But he—"

She stopped a moment or two, standing before the gate as if she were collecting her courage or her mind, then put her hand on the gate.

"Locked!" she said, with a smile. "I don't think that will keep me out!" and, resting her strong hand on the side post, she sprang over the low gate as easily as a boy of fifteen could have done.

As she did so, the dog came bounding down the path with a threatening growl.

She drew herself together, tightening every muscle, just as she did before one of her dangerous feats on the trapeze, and waited for him, her teeth set, her fist closed. The dog came up to her, and sniffed at her, then wagged his tail.

She laughed softly. "You're a fraud, my friend," she said, stooping down and patting him; then suddenly she gave him a kick, exclaiming: "I'll make you afraid of me before many hours are passed, bow-wow!"

The dog retreated with a yell, and she walked up to the door and knocked.

The servant, in his game-keeper suit, opened it. "Is Mr. Faradeane at home?" she asked.

The man held a small lamp above his head, and surveyed her, then looked beyond her at the gate with not unreasonable surprise.

"No, he isn't," he said. "What do you want?"

"I want to see him," she returned, firmly.

"My master is not at home," he said. "What name shall I say, ma'am?"

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"Why, what are you afraid of, you and your master?" she demanded, scornfully, a spot of red burning on each cheek. "Do you think I want to steal something?"

"I don't think and I don't care," he retorted, much less respectfully; "I know what my orders are, and I'm carrying them out. If you want to see my master leave your name, ma'am, and when he comes back I'll tell him. You can't come in, that's certain."

Her white, even teeth clinched viciously. "Oh!" she said, with a sneer. "Perhaps you'll tell me where he's gone."

"I don't know," said the man, phlegmatically, "and I shouldn't tell you if I did."

"You insolent—" she began, furiously; then she pulled up short, and, eyeing him closely, put her hand in her pocket and held something out to him.

The man shook his head. "No, thank you, ma'am. I'm acting under orders, and I can't break them."

"You'll be sorry for this, my fine fellow," she said, between her teeth; "when your master comes home and finds who it is you've been treating like a dog, you'll sing a different tune."

The man looked at her grimly. "What am I to do?" he said; "I'm only obeying my orders, I tell you. I don't know who you are, or what right you have to come in; I only know I can't let you. If you'll take my advice, you'll leave your name and come again."

She thought a moment or two. "Tell your master— No, I'll wait for him outside if I can't wait in," and she leaned against the door-post, and folded her arms in sullen defiance.

The man looked perplexed and nonplussed. "Well, I can't help it," he said at last, and he leaned against the other door-post, with his hands thrust into his pockets.

She remained in her attitude of stubborn patience for some minutes, then she walked down the path.

The man followed her. "That's right, ma'am," he said, soothingly; "you'd better go. I'll open the gate— Why, dash it all, it's locked! How did you come in?"

She vouchsafed no answer, but turned and walked up the path again. He stepped past her and guarded the door as before; and she, with an angry snarl, went down the garden path and leaned on the gate. There she remained till the darkness wrapped the lonely lane.

The man spoke to her two or three times urging her to go, but she made no reply, and took no notice of him whatever. The weary hours rolled along, then suddenly a firm step was heard in the lane, the man hurried to the gate and held up the lamp, and its light fell upon Faradeane.

It shone, too, upon the woman's face, defiant still, but now pale with some new emotion, as the black eyes flashed up at the handsome face of the man for whom she had been waiting.

He did not start, but into his grave, weary eyes came a strange look, as if the long-expected had come to pass at last.

"So I've found you," she breathed. "Do you know," she panted, "that this fellow has kept me out here—that he has treated me like a dog?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," the man broke in. "I told the lady she mustn't come in—she wanted to. I asked her to leave her name."

Faradeane unlocked the gate, took the lamp from the man, and signed to him to go in; then he turned to the woman and regarded her with a dead calmness.

"Yes, you have found me," he said, not defiantly, but in a still, steady voice. "What is it you mean to do—what is it you want?"

Her black eyes flashed up at him, and her lithe, strong hands clinched at her side.

"You talk as if I were nobody—nothing!" she said, hoarsely. "You are as nothing to me," he responded, with no trace of scorn, but with something in his tone that cut her more deeply than any outspoken contempt.

"Oh, I am, am I?" she retorted. "I'll show you differently presently. Do you think I am afraid of you? You'd like to kill me—you wish me dead—I know that! I can see it in your face. But I'm not dead, worse luck for you."

He turned his head slightly. Some one was passing in the lane. The footsteps stopped as if the passer-by had heard the words and had paused to listen.

Faradeane raised the lamp. "Good-night, Alford," he said.

Alford—for it was he—glanced from Faradeane to the dimly seen figure of the woman with an air of surprise; then, touching his hat, returned the "good-night" with deep respect, and walked on.

"Do you think I'm afraid of you?" she repeated. "You're mistaken if you do! You've got more cause to fear me. You know the secret between us. Drive me too hard with your cursed coldness and I'll shout it out here and now!" and she raised her clinched fist and shook it at him.

He looked down at her in silence, with an impassive face, but with a strange expression in his eyes; a mixture of loathing and something like pity—the expression a man might wear who looks upon a wild, furious animal.

The look seemed to madden her. "Why don't you speak?" she demanded. "Are you going to keep me standing out here any longer. Do you know how long I have been kept waiting by that brute of yours?"

"Say what you have to say here," he said, quietly.

"And suppose I refuse? Suppose I use the power I've got over you and insist upon going in? I've got my rights."

"No," he said; "you forfeited them long ago. Why have you come here? What benefit can you gain by tracking me down?"

"Tracked you down! Yes, you're right. That's just what I have done!" she retorted, with a laugh of triumph. "And now I've found you, I don't mean to leave you! You can't force me to, either."

"No," he said, as quietly as before, with an accent of weariness, "you are quite right; I cannot force you to leave me, but I can leave you. You demand, by the right of the secret between us, to enter that cottage; do so if you will, but I shall never cross the threshold again. You know that."

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One paper said this

Lord Lansdowne, because

health, is shortly to leave

Now I saw him walking

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**FRENCH AND ENGLISH MUNITIONERS**

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Piccadilly is "up." That

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