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TOO STRANGE NOT TO BE TRUE.

BY LADY GEORGINA FULLERTON.

PART II.—CHAPTER II.—Continued.

Mina gave a quick glance at Madame d'Auban's face. The talkative stranger had trod unawares on the sacred ground which her mother and herself never approached but on their knees.

"She is my only girl," Madame d'Auban nervously said, and hastened to ask—"Have you any children, Madame Lenoir?"

"No; and indeed I am very glad of it. M. Lenoir used to regret it; but I have said to him, many times since we came to this country, 'Who was right on that question, M. Lenoir? I suppose you will admit that a wife is quite a sufficient encumbrance, as you stand at present situated?' 'Oh, quite sufficient, my dear, quite sufficient,' he would answer. I must do him the justice to say he did not often contradict me. If I had any children, I should have been dreadfully afraid of their becoming like those young Indian devils."

"The Indians are not all devils," cried Mina, "I love the Indians."

"O fie! mademoiselle! Love those wicked Indians who murdered the good priest and my poor M. Lenoir, and all the Frenchmen! It was not their fault, I suppose, that your papa escaped?"

"It was one of them that helped him to escape, I know; and I love him and our brave Illinois, and the Choktaws, and the Dacotahs, and many others."

"I have never heard," cried Madame Lenoir, "of all those savages you speak of, little lady; but I know that, for my part, I should like to see every Indian burnt alive, and their horrid country swallowed up in the sea."

"And I should like to see you in the sea, and I should not pull you out," cried Mina, choking with passion.

"Oh, you little monster!" exclaimed Madame Lenoir.

"Mina, what are you saying?" said her mother, in a severe manner.

"But, mother, why does she say such cruel things? Because there are some cruel Indians, must we hate them all?"

"We must not hate even the cruel ones, but pity and pray for them."

"Well, pious people have strange notions!" ejaculated Madame Lenoir, "and they bring up their children very badly, I think. It is very extraordinary how unfeeling devout persons are! Ah! we cannot expect to find much sensibility in those who have not known what suffering is. Good evening, Madame d'Auban, I had hoped we might have proved a comfort to each other in our mutual sorrows, but—"

"Do not hurry away," Madame d'Auban kindly said. "Our trials are indeed great; and we ought to try and help each other. Do not be vexed with me."

"Oh, for that matter, I have a very happy disposition and a particularly sociable temper. But let me advise you, as a friend, not to let that little lady get into the habit of talking too much. One never gets rid of it in after-life. And do not make a devotee of her. Too much religion is a bad thing for children."

A faint shadow of a smile crossed Madame d'Auban's lips. Meantime Madame Lenoir was lifting up with difficulty her heavy pitcher.

"It will be heavier still when filled with water," she said, with a deep sigh, "and my shoulder is already aching with its weight! But I have been threatened with blows by a cross old Indian, in case I do not do her bidding."

The poor woman sat down on the grass, weeping bitterly. It was a selfish, unresisting grief, but pitiful to witness—like the sufferings of a fly crushed by a wheel.

"Ah! there is Ontara," cried Mina, clapping her hands. "Now you will see that he will help