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**THE Lady of the Night**  
—OR—  
**Amelia Makes a Success**

**CHAPTER XXVII.**  
**ELLIOT'S NEW FRIEND.**  
Elliott went slowly upstairs, looking about him with a faint interest. Suddenly he started, as Cyril had done, and stopped before the portrait on the landing. He was amazed, and could scarcely believe his eyes, and his heart stirred with emotion; for the portrait was that of his father. How came it there, in that old house, and why was it in the possession of Miss Ralston?  
When Jacob came lumbering up with the hot water, Elliott turned to him with the question—  
"Do you know whose portrait this is?"  
"No," replied Jacob indifferently. "How should I? Some friend or relation of Miss Deborah's, I suppose."  
Elliott tore himself away from the portrait reluctantly, and stood and gazed at it again before he went downstairs. He tried to remember his father's mentioning the name of Ralston, but he could not do so. The portrait was beautifully painted, and was doubtless valuable; it was probable that its present owner had bought it at some sale. He made a pretence of a meal, was driven to Portash, and took the train thence to London.  
He went down to Lloyd's at once, but could get no information, and tried one or two of the Bristol shipping agents; but they had heard nothing of the running down of the Happy Lucy, and at one of the offices the manager convinced him that it was too early to get tidings through official sources, and that if the boy were saved, Elliott would very soon hear from him direct. Compelled to be more or less satisfied with this result of his inquiries, Elliott went on to the man to whom Mr. Trustram had sent him. He found this gentleman up to his neck in business. He rapidly looked over the plans, and listened intently to Elliott's statement; then he pushed the drawings aside, glanced at his watch, frowned, and said—

"All right, Mr. Graham, I'll take it in hand as quickly as possible. Where are you staying? The 'Ocell' right? I'll communicate with you at the earliest possible moment."  
Elliott went back to the hotel, and as he was entering the courtyard a big burly man, in escaping a hansom cab, sprang on to the kerb so suddenly that he bounced against Elliott.  
"I beg your pardon," he said with a genial laugh. "Crowded place, this London of yours! I spend half my time dodging the cabs and the buses."  
"He broke off suddenly, and started at Elliott. "Why, bless my life! It isn't young Elliott Graham?"  
Elliott looked at the man, trying to remember him; then he said—  
"It's Mr. Wedderburn, isn't it?"  
"The same, my boy," responded the stranger heartily. "Well, of all the odd things, meeting you here!"  
They shook hands with warmth on both sides; for this Mr. Wedderburn had owned the nearest rancho to the Graham, and the two men had been great friends.  
"You're staying here, I hope?" said Mr. Wedderburn. "I'm awfully glad, by Jove! fancy running against you! I'd rather have met you than any man I know. My goodness! how many years it is since you and I saw each other! What a change!"  
He stopped and surveyed Elliott from head to toe. "You were a mere slip of a boy then, and now you're a full-grown man, and a first-rate one at that. How time passes. Stopping at the 'Ocell' here, eh?" he went on thoughtfully. "So things have turned out all right, have they? You're flourishing, eh? I thought they would; always said so. Glad I'm right."  
"Yes, I am flourishing," admitted Elliott.  
"You must tell me all about it some day," said Wedderburn. "Hope you haven't had your dinner? That's right! We'll have it together. By George, I'm in luck! Got plenty of friends outside, but don't know a soul in this huge hotel, and feel quite lonely. By the way, now I look at you again, you don't look in very high fettle, do you? London air, I suppose; not that I've been able to find any yet! How on earth any one can live in a place like this, without air to breathe, or room to move their elbows, when they can come out to Australia. I can't understand—Walter, let's have the best dinner you can put on, and a bottle of that champagne I had last night."  
They dined together, and Elliott cheered up somewhat; indeed, it would have been rather difficult to brood in the company of the genial, light-hearted and prosperous Australian. He had come over to London on business, but was combining a large amount of pleasure with it; and on hearing that Elliott had nothing particular to do, he insisted on their chumming together and becoming close companions.  
They went to the theatre together that evening, and Mr. Wedderburn enjoyed himself exceedingly; but Elliott's mind wandered back to Lonsway and Cyril, and the childish entertainment failed to divert his thoughts. He spent a portion of the next day making inquiries at the shipping agents whom he had not yet tried, but without any result. At dinner Mr. Wedderburn said that he was going to a reception, and begged Elliott to accompany him.  
"It's a place at the West End," he explained, "belonging to a big City man. It's rather a mixed affair, this party, with business attached to it, as is very often the case, so I am told. I wish you'd come with me. I know I can bring a friend."  
Elliott consented to go, and after dinner, they got a hansom, and were driven to one of the large houses in Kensington Palace Gardens. It was evident that the reception was a very large one, for there were a number of



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persons in the hall, and several footmen in gorgeous livery were busy taking hats and coats and announcing the arrivals.  
"A sight like this would make some of our friends on the other side stare, wouldn't it?" remarked Wedderburn. "I will say they have a style of doing things in London which looks the rest of the world. Just look at this place, and reflect that there are hundreds, thousands of houses as fine and large in London! Think of the money it means! I am told that Sir Joseph is one of the richest men in the City."  
Before Elliott could get over his surprise at hearing the name, they had made their way up the staircase, and were announced.

**CHAPTER XXVIII.**  
**IN LONDON.**  
Lady Ferrand stood just within the handsome room to receive her guests. She carried a bouquet almost as large as herself, and as she shook hands, smiled mechanically, and murmured, as mechanically, the parrot-like formula—  
"So glad to see you! So good of you to come!"  
It is scarcely necessary to say that she did not recognize Elliott; it is doubtful whether she knew or remembered one out of a hundred of the people whom she greeted.  
Elliott saw Sir Joseph standing in a corner of the room, the centre of a group of men with "City" written large all over them. They appeared to be hanging on his words and intently watching his face.  
Elliott was wondering what it all meant, and how soon he could get away from the place, when he happened to tread on the skirt of a lady's dress. She turned and apologized, and found that the lady was Miss Florence Bartley. She murmured the conventional acceptance of his apology, then she raised her eyes, held him for a moment, and with a startled expression on her face, said—  
"Mr. Graham!"  
Elliott smiled.  
"You are surprised to see me here," he said, in his frank, ingenuous way. "I am just about as surprised myself."  
"Yes, I am," she admitted. "Tell me—take me out of the crowd; there is a little room over there, through that doorway."  
She put her hand lightly on his arm, and he led her into the ante-room.  
"And now," she said with a smile, "begin from the beginning."  
Elliott had not the least intention of beginning at the beginning, or, indeed, of telling her anything of all that had happened to him since they had last met.  
"I came with a friend," he said, "an old friend of my father's, from Australia."  
She glanced at him quickly.  
"How interesting! What is his name?"  
"Wedderburn," replied Elliott.  
"Are you staying in London?" she asked.  
Elliott said that he was, and gave the name of the hotel.  
"I am so glad," she said. "I mean that it is so pleasant to meet an old friend"—Elliott looked somewhat surprised at the term, and she went on quickly—"I mean, some one from that delightful place in Devonshire. Are you going to stay long?"  
"I am not sure," said Elliott.  
"At any rate, you must come and see me," she said. "I am staying with my father at his digs in Jermyn Street. Oh, there is my father!"  
She beckoned with her fan, and an elderly young man, with a bald head round which was carefully wound a wisp of hair, and prominent eyes which seemed to be looking out hungrily for something, came towards them.  
"Father, this is Mr. Graham, of whom you have often heard me speak."  
Sir Terence looked mystified but for only an instant; his face wrinkled with an ingratiating smile, and he held out his hand, exclaiming—  
"Of course, of course! Delighted to meet you, Mr. Graham. Florence and I were only talking of you last night; delighted to meet you!"  
"I am trying to persuade Mr. Graham," said Florence, with a warning emphasis on the name, "to come in to tea to-morrow afternoon."  
"Yes, yes," said Sir Terence. "Unfortunately, I shall be away. Board meeting; but you must come and see with us, Mr. Graham. Come, come, we can't take a refusal," he added excitedly, for he was quick to read the signs on his daughter's countenance. "Come and take pot-luck, as we say in Ireland. Ah! There's Sir Joseph! I want a word with him."  
With the exclamation he went off, making his way through the crowd like a small jack in pursuit of minnows.  
"My father's an awfully busy man," explained Florence; "they say that he's Sir Joseph's right hand. By the way, have you spoken to Sir Joseph yet?"  
"No," said Elliott. "I see that my friend, Mr. Wedderburn, is making his way to him."  
"Let us see if we can succeed in doing so," said Florence.  
They insinuated a passage through the crowd, her hand still on his arm, as if she were afraid of his escaping. They got to Sir Joseph just as Wedderburn reached him.

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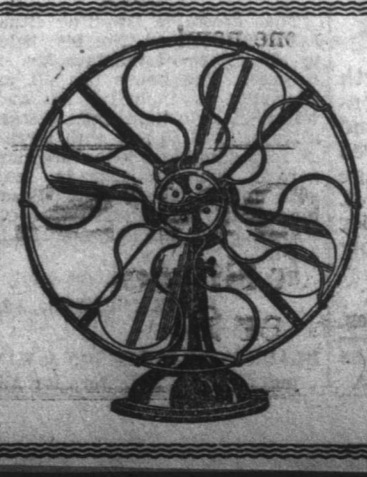
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