

"I Was a Fright!"

"Nothing I Could Take Made Me Any Fatter."

"Up to the time I was seventeen years old, I believe that I was the most miserable and unhappy girl that ever lived. . . . Honestly, I was a fright. I was the most ungainly-looking creature you ever saw. I was thin and scrawny—straight up and down. My height was five feet nine inches and I weighed exactly ninety-one and three quarter pounds. No matter what kind of clothes I put on I looked like a fright. I was clumsy and awkward. I used to stand before the glass and study my features. I found I had a good nose, good eyes and a good mouth, but my cheeks were sunken and my face looked like a skull with a piece of parchment stretched over it. But nothing I could do or take made me any fatter. Men rarely even glanced at me. When they did, they merely gave me a casual, amused or pitying look—an expression which I am sure meant, 'why is a being like that allowed at large?' I used to lie awake at night for hours at a time wondering why there were so many beautiful girls in the world and I was so hideous. I

met a friend of mine one day, Elsie W. and I hardly knew her. While she had never been as thin as I was, a year or more ago she ran me a close second, but when I met her she had taken on flesh and had developed into a fine handsome girl with one of the prettiest figures I had ever seen. I asked her what had caused the big change. She said Carol. She told me she had been taking it regularly for the last three months and that from the first week of taking it she had begun to put on flesh. I was so encouraged by what she said that I couldn't get to the druggist fast enough. I bought a bottle and since then I have been taking it regularly. It has made the greatest change in me you ever saw. I now weigh 165 pounds and all my friends tell me what a wonderful figure I have and I know that I am admired. Carol is sold by your druggist, after you have tried it, that it has done you any good, return the empty bottle to him and he will refund your money. 8-22

LADY IRIS' MISTAKE;

Hero of 'Surata'

CHAPTER XVI

"I will, if you will give me your word never to repeat it, not even to him; he would never forgive me if you did."

"I will never repeat it—you know that, Mr. Bardon; you know how fully and perfectly you may trust me. What is the romance?"

"I cannot give you all the details," he replied—"he did mention them to me, but I have forgotten them." The fact was that he had not imagination enough to invent a story. "The romance is that he is entitled to much more honor and to a title, but for his mother's sake he has relinquished them."

"How can that be?" she asked eagerly. "I do not remember; but you must not think that there is any dishonor attached to his mother or himself—nothing of the kind. I wish I had a better memory—I never could remember family complications; but when he told me, I said to myself that I had never met with such an instance of self-sacrifice."

She did not stop to think whether his story—the story by which he blinded and deluded her—was true or not. Captain Osburn was of gentle birth, and for his mother's sake, in some vague romantic way, he had given up title and fortune. She was not surprised; he seemed capable of any noble action, of any heroic sacrifice. She felt no curiosity to know what he had done; it was sufficient that he had done it.

"Remember your promise that you will never say one word to him," John Bardon went on. "It may be that some day, if he knows you well, he will tell you his story himself. On that day think of me. You may say just this much to him, that I have told you how we first met. This is our dance, Lady Iris. And, as he stood by her side, he wiped great drops of perspiration, arising either from fear or anguish, from his brow."

Ten minutes afterward Lady Iris found herself talking to the man to whom she honestly believed she owed her life. It was a novel sensation to her. Hitherto she had accepted with indifference the homage offered to her, not troubling herself in the least to

amuse or entertain those who were talking to her; but now she found herself watching her new friend's face to see if his eyes gleamed with amusement; and she exerted herself to interest him.

There was an interval between the dances, and Captain Osburn took her to a seat in a corner of the room which was placed before masses of sweet-smelling flowers.

"It will be better for you to rest a little before the next dance," he said gently.

She could hardly tell how it was, but there was a tone of command in his voice, even while it was most gentle, that seemed to compel obedience. She sat down, and he stood bending over her, his noble figure and dark magnificent face contrasting strongly with her fair and delicate loveliness.

"It seems so strange," she said, "to meet you here. I had begun to think this morning that I should never see you again."

"You honored me then by thinking of me?"

She was quite unconscious of all that her words implied, and answered readily—

"Yes, I thought of you. How could I help it when you saved my life?"

"I am not sure that I did that, Lady Iris. I can hardly believe that the fellow, brute as he was, would have killed you."

"I saw murder in his eyes," she returned, calmly. "I think his heart was so set upon getting money that he would have taken my life. By-the-by, what became of him?"

"I sent for the police," he replied smiling. "I dared not, although I longed to do it, charge him with assault, because your name must in that case have been brought into it, and that I knew you would not like."

"I should have been greatly distressed," she said. "I thank you very much for your thoughtfulness."

"You may rely upon one thing," continued Allan, "that to the last day of his life he will regret having raised his hand against you."

Her face drooped, and she spoke hurriedly.

"Captain Osburn, you must not consider me ungrateful; I may have appeared cold and insensible, but from my heart I thank you for your assistance."

She held out her hand to him, and it lay for one moment in his warm clasp. He felt that he could have knelt down before her and have worshiped her; his heart was beating fast, and his pulses throbbed. The beautiful face, all the pride gone from it and softened into tenderness, the sweet voice that seemed to stir his very soul, mastered him for the moment. But he was one of those who do not give way to emotion. With an effort he conquered his feelings, and said—

"I was delighted to be able to render you a service—I cannot tell you how delighted. I shall always consider that day in the green lane as the happiest day of my life."

Just then the first notes of the waltz sounded through the room. Lady Iris looked up with a smile at her companion.

"Then we will sit here quietly, if you like."

"It is the greatest favor you can grant me," he replied. "I had hardly dared to hope for such a pleasure."

So they sat conversing, while the sweet music of the dreamy waltz floated through the room and the fragrance of the flowers reached them. This was for them the first faint dawning of love's young dream—a sweet experience to be remembered by both while life lasted. It was not that they said much while together, but to both was coming swiftly and surely the one great dawn of passion that never returns.

The cessation of the music startled them, and a great wave of color rushed into the girl's face.

"How long have we been sitting here!" she said.

"It has seemed but a few moments to me," he answered; "but I must resign my happiness now, for I see that dark frowns and envious faces. Your partners wish to claim you, Lady Iris."

He left her with a bow, and all the brightness seemed to go with him. She was unwilling to leave the pretty nook where she had been so happy, unwilling to give her thought to any one else, or to dance. All that she cared to do was to sit still and wait until he returned—sit and think of every word he had uttered, and wonder what he would say when they met next. Her mind was full of him and every changing expression of the handsome face was before her eyes.

"I knew there were such men in the world," she said to herself. "If they can be found in pictures and poems, why not in real life?"

Then she was forced to give up her dreams. One after another her partners came to her, and she was compelled to dance. Those of her partners who had been accustomed to her wit and delicate satire wondered why she was so silent that night, what the new light on her face and in her eyes meant, why she seemed more beautiful than ever, yet farther from them. Once when there was a longer pause than usual between the dances, Lady Avis came up to her.

"You are looking remarkably well to-night, Lady Iris," she said—whispering to the mistress of Hyme Court was an unusual compliment. It was very seldom she admired any one's looks.

"I am very well and very happy," replied the young beauty, "and have never enjoyed a ball so much before, Lady Avis."

A slow smile that was not pleasant to see came over the elder woman's face.

"I am glad to hear it," she said. "We have some very nice people here; and I consider it the best attended of any ball we have given at the court."

There was silence for a few moments; and then Lady Avis said slowly—

"Have you been introduced to our esteemed visitor, Captain Osburn? I forget."

Her small eyes keenly scrutinized Lady Iris' face, over which a lovely flush spread. The heiress could not control the brightness that shone in her eyes at the sound of his name.

"Yes," she replied. "Mr. Bardon introduced me."

"I consider him," remarked Lady Avis, "an ideal man. What do you think of him, Lady Iris?"

The girl's color deepened; but an answer did not come readily, so Lady Avis went on—

"He has been staying with us for a week, and I am enchanted with him—that is more, I believe, than I have ever said of any man. He is just the man one reads of in stories and poems—the sort of man who makes other men seem commonplace. He is so fearless, and yet so gentle; he has the sweetest of tempers and the kindest of hearts. I have seen him do two things since he has been here that are no doubt characteristic of him."

(To be continued.)

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