

# POOR DOCUMENT

## KATE VALLIANT.

With --the-- Circus

(Continued.)

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Philip shouted back as he drove off. "My blessed heart! so the master's to be married at last, a grand London lady. I suppose I wish he'd taken one we know'd about. They Londoners have queer ways; you can never tell what fashion they're going to be."

So Mrs. Curtis conjectured, and her son answered her according to his wider experience. "Your grand London lady is very much like your country lady in these days. But I wish Miss Kate was the one to be married first! I'm sorry there's another coming to be mistress here while Miss Kate's at home."

"She'll be married before long, bless you. Young Mr. Glanville here's pretty often; don't you fear! Our Miss Kate isn't going to be left to be a poor old maid without no man to take care of her."

"I wish she'd been married before Mr. Phillip; Miss Kate oughtn't to have to take a back seat, and that's what she'll do when the master brings home a wife."

Ralph was saying this thoughtfully, when a groom came up leading the new purchase, and in the contemplation of the brown mare's perfect points the circus-riders forgot his fears for Miss Kate's future.

The next day the brown mare had a good deal of schooling, both from Ralph and Kate Valliant, and as she departed herself entirely to their satisfaction Philip wrote a glowing account of the brown mare's perfect points the circus-riders forgot his fears for Miss Kate's future.

"Your half-sister appears to have an extraordinary circle of acquaintances! To spend the whole morning in the society of a circus-riders is surely hardly fitting for a young lady; is she going to marry the man, I hope she will do it while there is still time for me to avert the consequences of the scandal that would ensue, from myself!"

Philip read these astounding sentiments in a fog. At the first reading her meaning was not clear to him. Then he read them again, and realized that the woman he loved and was going to marry and put in the position of ruler over himself and his home and all that was his, suspected his sister—his mother's darling—the child who had been left to his guardianship of a love affair with a circus-riders who had been his stable boy! And as he realized this his faith faltered away, and his heart recoiled for the first time from the circus-riders. He said nothing of the contents of the letter to Kate. But she, seeing his receive and read and brood over it justly enough judged that those contents were not of a pleasing nature. "Could Blanche have broken off the engagement?" Kate asked in the question of her heart. But she answered herself with a cry, "No! she would not do that! It is a disgrace, a disgrace, a disgrace!"

Yet all the while he was thinking this, he was determining to take the agency of Lord Marlton's estate, and would place him close to Hasselton; at his very gates! Godfrey thought remorseful.

CHAPTER VII.

Philip Wyndham's sound, healthy, unimpaired mind soon threw off the morbid, painful sense of mortification which had oppressed it when he parted with Blanche. "It was only natural, that a pure, proud woman, such as he felt sure Blanche was, should be reserved and distant, even with the man she was to marry, in these early days of their engagement. More especially since that man was nearly a stranger to her. It would soon win her trust and confidence and then love, and the delicate exhibition of love would surely soon follow."

He told himself these things over and over again on his journey down, and by the time Kate and he drove up to lodge gates, his spirits were buoyant and his heart was light.

The gates were opened by a trim bull-dog, dapper looking young fellow, in place of Mrs. Curtis, the lodge-keeper, and for a moment there was no recognition in Philip Wyndham's eyes as they rested on the stranger. But in another moment he had pulled up his horses, and was crying out—

"Why, Ralph! I'm glad to see you back! I hope you've done roving, and mean to stick to the Hasselton estates."

"That's what I'm atelling him! Master Phillip's old Mrs. Curtis hobbled out to say, but Ralph shook his head.

"I've been in the Circus too long, Master Phillip—that is, Mr. Wyndham—to go back to the stables, now; well surely, this isn't Miss Kate! grown from the little girl who rode the pony bare-backed, to quite the young lady."

"Yes, Miss Kate still, Ralph," the girl said, holding out her hand to their old stable-boy, who had left them eight years ago for the fascinations of a circus. In the course of those years, Ralph Curtis had developed from a plucky rough rider into a dashing, graceful, and accomplished circus-riders. And now, as the company to which he belonged were starting through the country towns about Hasselton, he had come home for a few days, to show old friends what a success the runaway stable-boy had achieved.

"I can make the old mother comfortable for the rest of her life, without her needing to work and more, sir," the young fellow said, with an affectionate glance at his proud and happy mother; "and I hope Miss Kate and you won't take it amiss, if I say that, when the troupe comes to Straceyleigh, I hope you'll come and see some of my feats. I'm the best man in the company, either through the hoops, on the bare-backed horses, or steeple-chase jumping."

"We'll come certainly, Ralph, and you come up to the house to-morrow, and tell us a few of your experiences; and, by the way, you can try a new mare I've just bought for a lady, over the hurdles for me; your hands are as good as ever, I suppose."

Little did Philip think as he gave this invitation that his old servant's acceptance of it would mark every plan he had made for his own life, and change the whole current of his sister Kate's career!

"I'll come surely, sir," Ralph said, with sparkling eyes. He had not anticipated meeting with such a free and kindly welcome from the old master whose services he had quitted so unconventionally long ago, and he longed to show them all at Hasselton how capable he now was of witting the world with his noble horsemanship.

"You'll see the mare pass through from the station presently; look her over, and let me have your verdict on her to-morrow; she's for the future Mrs. Wyndham."

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"It would astonish so much of the world as knows us a little, I think, if it were told that you offered to jilt me (that is what your offer comes to) because I had expressed some care and anxiety for your sister's honor—which I imagined was dear to you and bound up with your own. Pray, forget my remark about the circus-riders, and if it is to be a match, and you approve of it, I will never have anything more to say."

"My poor dear Kate! you'll be no wiser with her, the disillusioned lover sighed, and, with all his heart, he wished that Charlie Glanville would not fear his fate too much, but would come to the point, and rescue Kate.

Godfrey Wyndham saw nothing of his family for some days after Blanche had made her revelation. By that time he had "got himself into form, and pulled himself together," as he expressed it, and his mother's voluble comments, and Fred's quiet sneers, on the subject of the engagement made no outward impression on him.

"She's the girl you knew at Oban, isn't she, Godfrey? Fred asked.

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"They live in a hideously out-of-the-way part of the country, and I don't know where Boomerang Road before? Miss Fred went on superciliously. "My idea is that her mother keeps a boarding house for clerks in the city, and fresh air, and fancy they get it in the suburbs."

"Your idea is correct, Hasselton will be what my mother would call a pleasant place for her," Godfrey answered carelessly.

"If she is as lovely as he says?" Fred went on.

"What did he say about her? Godfrey asked, longing to hear that she was approved of, and not that she was another name for herself having the right to express that appreciation.

"Oh, he spoke sensibly enough on the whole, but Kate was rapturous about her beauty to mamma—"

Kate always was a trick of a girl, with out a bit of jealousy in her nature. His sister as well as himself was suffering through Blanche Carrull's fickleness and falsity.

"If it hadn't been for Blanche perhaps poor little Fred would have stood him down in the end, and she'd have loved him, and been happy! Blanche will neither do the one nor the other—and I don't want to look dear old Phil in the face. I'd better never see her again."

Yet all the while he was thinking this, he was determining to take the agency of Lord Marlton's estate, and would place him close to Hasselton; at his very gates! Godfrey thought remorseful.

CHAPTER VIII.

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"It would astonish so much of the world as knows us a little, I think, if it were told that you offered to jilt me (that is what your offer comes to) because I had expressed some care and anxiety for your sister's honor—which I imagined was dear to you and bound up with your own. Pray, forget my remark about the circus-riders, and if it is to be a match, and you approve of it, I will never have anything more to say."

"My poor dear Kate! you'll be no wiser with her, the disillusioned lover sighed, and, with all his heart, he wished that Charlie Glanville would not fear his fate too much, but would come to the point, and rescue Kate.

Godfrey Wyndham saw nothing of his family for some days after Blanche had made her revelation. By that time he had "got himself into form, and pulled himself together," as he expressed it, and his mother's voluble comments, and Fred's quiet sneers, on the subject of the engagement made no outward impression on him.

"She's the girl you knew at Oban, isn't she, Godfrey? Fred asked.

"She told me she was the other night; I shouldn't say anything about it," Godfrey replied, with a deeper meaning in his words than his sister fastened on.

"They live in a hideously out-of-the-way part of the country, and I don't know where Boomerang Road before? Miss Fred went on superciliously. "My idea is that her mother keeps a boarding house for clerks in the city, and fresh air, and fancy they get it in the suburbs."

"Your idea is correct, Hasselton will be what my mother would call a pleasant place for her," Godfrey answered carelessly.

"If she is as lovely as he says?" Fred went on.

"What did he say about her? Godfrey asked, longing to hear that she was approved of, and not that she was another name for herself having the right to express that appreciation.

"Oh, he spoke sensibly enough on the whole, but Kate was rapturous about her beauty to mamma—"

Kate always was a trick of a girl, with out a bit of jealousy in her nature. His sister as well as himself was suffering through Blanche Carrull's fickleness and falsity.

"If it hadn't been for Blanche perhaps poor little Fred would have stood him down in the end, and she'd have loved him, and been happy! Blanche will neither do the one nor the other—and I don't want to look dear old Phil in the face. I'd better never see her again."

Yet all the while he was thinking this, he was determining to take the agency of Lord Marlton's estate, and would place him close to Hasselton; at his very gates! Godfrey thought remorseful.

CHAPTER VIII.