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**Under False Colors
Lord Somerton's Ally.**

CHAPTER IX
Lord Somerton scrambled to his feet, his face livid with rage, his baleful black eyes blazing. The attack had been so sudden, so unlooked for, that he was momentarily bewildered. He looked Colin Ernscliffe from head to foot and knew that he was no match for the young giant who stood regarding him with a half-contemptuous smile.
By a mighty effort he partially recovered himself, and spoke coolly, almost collectedly, though he could not disguise the covert sneer in his tones, or subdue the lightning of savage hate that gleamed in his eyes:
"There is not much merit in attacking a man from behind," he said, "and I demand the favor of an explanation, sir. I do not know you, or by what right you are here."
"There is nothing cowardly in the manner of chastising a ruffian who endeavors to terrorize a lady, no matter in what way it is administered," replied Colin Ernscliffe, sternly. "I have a right here, possibly equal to that of your own, and consider myself fortunate indeed in being able to relieve Miss Sterne of your unmanly importunities."
Just then he saw the appealing light in Elsie's eyes, he saw that she was trembling with fear, and turned toward her, saying:
"May I see you to the house, Miss Sterne?"
He offered his arm, and Elsie clung to it gratefully. She was half ashamed of her cowardice, of her weakness, but her heart trobled so painfully that she found it difficult to breathe.
"One moment," said Lord Somerton; "an exchange of cards is necessary under the circumstances, and we shall doubtless meet again to-day, being guests under the same roof. I have no wish now to aggravate the unpleasant-



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ness of the situation, for Miss Sterne's sake; but you must understand, sir, that the matter does not end here."
"I am ever at your service—Mr.—ah—Lord Somerton," added Ernscliffe, glancing at the card his lordship had presented.
"It appears that we are not absolute strangers to each other—by reputation at least. I am Colin Ernscliffe, the artist."
For an instant an expression of surprise swept over Somerton's face, replaced almost immediately by a bitter smile, as he bowed mockingly to Elsie.
"Lord Somerton commissioned me to paint one of his thoroughbreds two years since, Miss Sterne," Ernscliffe explained, as they moved away. "He was one of my earliest and most liberal patrons, though this is the first time that we have met."
"And I have perhaps caused a breach between you that may never be healed!" Elsie said. "I am so sorry, Mr. Ernscliffe."
The artist shrugged his shoulders, and a fierce laugh escaped him, so fierce that Miss Sterne looked up in surprise.
"The cur!" he muttered; "the despicable cur! Miss Sterne, I declined his favors long ago. I discovered his character and spurned the patronage of a scoundrel whose very breathing in your pure presence is a sacrilege. He probably never troubled to inquire the why and the wherefore. What mattered to him the eccentricities of a struggling artist? His enmity only showed itself in his own immediate circle, and has rather benefited than injured me. I was not a successful man then; I am now."
Elsie listened to all this and understood sufficient to convince her that Colin Ernscliffe had good reason for holding Lord Somerton in the uttermost contempt.
"Are you feeling better, Miss Sterne?" the artist asked, presently, in tones so soft and tender that Elsie could not resist a vivid blush.
"Oh, yes. There is not much the matter now," she replied, brightly. "I was afraid that you would hurt each other. Lord Somerton looks like one who would not hesitate to use a pistol or a knife. I should not care at all if I were sure that you two would not meet again."
He laughed lightly, but his purple eyes seemed to grow black as night; his splendid shoulders expanded, and he muttered, half to himself:
"My lord of Somerton had better beware!"
The mazy walk was nearly at an end, and a broad patch of sunshine warned them that they would soon be in the open, where their movements might be seen from the upper windows of the house.
Elsie slipped her hand from Ernscliffe's arm, glanced at his smiling, quizzical face, and blushed a rosy red.
"You are sure that you can walk alone, Miss Sterne?" he asked, mischievously. "I am reluctant that this should end so quickly. To me it has been a most delicious time. I shall never forget it!" He paused and looked at her quickly. "Perhaps you think that I am presumptuous, Miss Sterne—I, a mere artist, to treat you upon such terms of close familiarity when we have not even had a proper introduction!"
"Do not speak in that way, please, Mr. Ernscliffe," Elsie said, gently. "Genius finds an equality nowhere on earth. It is superior to princes and emperors! Do you not believe that a few mortals are specially favored by the gods? At times I love to think that the old stories of the Greeks are not all mythical—but that they are founded upon very truth! As to an introduction, are you not my cousin's friend? and do you not bear the best of credentials?"
She spoke half laughingly now, and Ernscliffe's heart throbbed with rapture.
For a minute he feared that she would see the wild light in his eyes, and he turned his head, remarking in unsteady tones:
"I do not think that the enemy is following us, Miss Sterne, or even prying upon our movements, and I would suggest that we have a few moments' conversation here, before going into the house. I dread some interruption, and wish to learn a few facts without delay."
He faced her again, and felt that he would have given worlds to have the right to banish the trouble that momentarily crept into her lovely eyes.
"I will do as you wish, Mr. Ernscliffe," Elsie replied. "Even if I desist-

ed I could not well refuse when you are going to so much trouble for my father's sake.
"I think that it is more for yours, Miss Sterne," he burst out, then instantly regretted the speech.
It was most indiscreet, and a frown flashed over his brow when he remembered that these familiarities would be bitterly resented by the baronet's daughter when she knew all.
"We can talk here," Miss Sterne said, through a small labyrinth of stunted firs and bushes of holly, and entering a lawn whose verdant walls shielded it from every passing wind. "This is papa's favorite place of seclusion, and was evidently designed for an invalid, the wall of trees inclosing it being several yards deep.
"Delightful!" exclaimed Ernscliffe, leading Elsie to a rustic seat under the shadow of a giant maple. "What a famous resting-place for lovers! Now try and fancy that we are lovers, Miss Sterne!"
Elsie looked into his bold, handsome face, and in all the years to come he never forgot the expression in her pansy eyes! He knew that he had awakened the woman in her heart—he knew that he loved her—that he would love her for all time!
He stepped quickly to a fragrant clump of mignonette, remarking that it was one of his favorite flowers. He wished to hide the tumultuous throbbing of heart and brain—to hide the maddening anguish that convulsed his features.
He returned to his seat, his face half buried in the mignonette that he had so ruthlessly torn from its bed. Then he looked at Elsie, and she was startled by his pallor, though he smiled.
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A Friend of mine has recently traded in her old automobile for a lovely shiny new car. She brought it around to show me the day after she bought it. I expected her to be overflowing with delight with her new possession, and she did have a certain pride in its gleaming surfaces and fresh upholstery. But what do you think the dominant note of her mood was?
A Terrible Bore.
"Sometimes I wish I had kept the old car for I've got to break this one in and my husband insists that I shan't drive more than 20 miles an hour the first thousand mile. That's the one stipulation he made. I don't really think there's any need of it. It's just one of the notions he gets. And it's such a bore. I have to struggle all the time to keep down, and you really can't get anywhere when you have to creep along like that."
She wasn't talking for effect. She meant it. It did seem like creeping to her. And I don't doubt there are thousands who have had the same feeling when they changed from an old to a new car.
But when you stop to think of it, isn't it almost funny?

A Four Mile Speed Limit.
When automobiles first appeared in England they were only allowed on the public highways on condition that they did not go more than four miles an hour and that a man with a red flag walked in front of them.
When steam trains first began to run in this country, the doctors objected to them, said that it would blind the passengers to see the landscape go past so fast.
In the early days of automobiles I can well remember signs that prohibited more than 15 miles an hour anywhere, and more than eight miles an hour on city streets.
"I've hardly used my car this year," a man said to me in August. "I haven't driven it but about 2,000 miles this summer."

The Horse Holds Its Own
OTTAWA Ont., Oct. 11.—(Canadian Press)—So far as farm work is concerned the horse is more than holding its own against the encroachment of traction engines and motor-trucks. This opinion is held by officials of the Livestock Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture, who have made a study of the situation with special regard towards the materialization or otherwise of the prediction once made that the gasoline tractor was old Dobbin's death warrant. Attention was drawn to the successful battle which the horse is waging against his mechanical opponent, the internal combustion engine, at a recent hearing before the Dominion Railway Commission, when that body was asked to grant a twenty-five percent reduction in freight-rates on horses. Records dealing with horses show clearly that the three Prairie Provinces no longer look to Eastern Canada for their supply of horses but are in a position to turn the tables upon Ontario and Quebec. It is estimated that over five thousand horses were shipped to Eastern Canada from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta during last year and there is every indication that the traffic will continue. In explanation of this phenomenal change in conditions, livestock officials refer to figures showing the number of horses in the various provinces when the war occurred in comparison with the number at the present time. Before the war Ontario had 900,000 horses and at the present time there are less than 675,000; Quebec records a slight gain, while the Maritime Provinces and British Columbia lost though the decrease was slight in comparison with that experienced in Ontario. Very different was the situation which developed in the Prairie Provinces during the last few years. When the war began Alberta had 680,000 horses and this number has increased to over a million; Saskatchewan recorded an advance from 650,000 to 750,000, and Manitoba also showed a substantial gain. A survey of the market during the war years shows that not more than 85,000 horses were taken from Canada for war purposes. Farmers at that time became greatly interested in the possibilities of the tractor and the motor-truck. Circumstances combined to discourage the breeding of horses until 1920 and 1921, when money was scarce and agriculturists turned once more to what livestock officials believe is the cheaper agency—the horse.
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