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THE Lady of the Night
—
Amelia Makes a Success

CHAPTER XXXIII.
A DISCOVERY.

"I've brought you back your charge, madam," said Eliot.

Miss Deborah was engaged in an animated conversation with the old dowager beside her, and Eliot had to repeat his little speech before he could attract her attention; then she turned her head, looked up at him with a smile, and to his amazement and discomfiture, rose slowly, and stared at him, her face working.

"What's your name?" she demanded, after an embarrassing pause.

"Eliot Graham," said Eliot.

"Graham!" she echoed with a gasp. "It's all right, madam," said Striple, soothingly. "Come with me and get a cup of tea. I'm hankering for one myself."

Miss Deborah still stared confusedly at Eliot; but Mr. Striple, gesticulating warningly to Nora, drew Miss Deborah's arm within his and led her off, leaving Eliot Graham standing, like a stock of stone with bewildered, watching them disappear.

Eliot felt the beautiful eyes of the Lady of the Night flashing through her mask at him inquiringly, as if she, too, were wondering at Miss Deborah's agitation; but she did not speak, and a gentleman coming up to claim her for the next dance, she went away with him, leaving Eliot still gazing, first after her and then after Mr. Striple and the old lady.

He was so absorbed that Wedder-

burn, coming up, had to address him twice before he could attract his attention.

"You look as if your wits were wool-gathering, Eliot," he said, with a laugh. "Listen to your late partner, eh? I'm not surprised; I'll wager anything that the face behind that mask is one of the most beautiful in the room. The affair is going with a swing, isn't it? Sir Joseph really is a wonderful man—of course, it's his doing, he has stage-managed the whole thing; that poor little wife of his is only a lay figure. And, of course, people are influenced by social success, especially such as this. You see he'll float that Company, and the shares will be at a premium before the week's up."

"What Company?" asked Eliot.

"Good heavens! do you mean to say you don't know!" said Wedderburn. "Why, the great Byworthy Copper Company, of course!"

Eliot did not start, but he stared at Wedderburn. "Tell me about it," he said.

Wedderburn laughed again. "That would be rather a long story," he said. "But, my good fellow! I thought everybody in London was talking and thinking of nothing else but the great Byworthy Copper Company. There is just that touch of romance in it that catches the public. It appears that Sir Joseph while botanizing—down in Devonshire, found indications of copper on the land of one of his neighbours—I can't think of that man's name for the moment.—Of course, Sir Joseph kept the discovery to himself and bought the land for a mere song. That's the way it usually done; but the romance comes in on the fact that the land belonged to this neighbour's daughter. I've got his name now! Rival. It's rather hard on her, for, of course, if she had known of the existence of the copper she could have sold the land for an immense sum, or clung on and worked the Company and netted a quarter of a million—they say Sir Joseph will make more than that out of it. Strangely enough there's a rumour that the girl has disappeared; at any rate, no one has met her, or, indeed, seen anything of her.—What's the matter?" he broke off, for Eliot's face had grown still grimmer, and he uttered a stifled exclamation.

"Do you know any more?" asked Eliot in a queer voice.

"No," said Wedderburn. "You seem rather interested. Look here, if you want all the particulars, you should look up a man named Striple, a kind of clerk of Sir Joseph's. He's here tonight; going about advertising this Company, so to speak."

Eliot rose, his lips tightly shut. Without a word he went in search of Striple, and found that interesting individual in a small ante-room; he was alone, and seated in front of a huge raised pile, beside which stood a bottle of champagne. Mr. Striple was devouring this rich fare with evident gusto. At sight of Eliot's grave, grim

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face, Mr. Striple's mouth opened and his jaw dropped, and he rose obediently, as Eliot said firmly and in a tone Mr. Striple had not yet heard him use.

"I want a word with you, Mr. Striple. I won't keep you from your supper for more than a minute or two. I want to ask you about the copper mine at Byworthy."

"Don't!" exclaimed Mr. Striple, clutching Eliot's arm in a frenzy of appeal. "Don't ask any questions, my dear young girl! Pray, pray, let things go on! They are going all right, I assure you. Just put your trust in Striple; he's doing his best—"

At that moment Mr. Selwyn Ferrand entered the ante-room. He was dressed as a cavalier, and, at a glance, Eliot saw, by Selwyn's neatly gait, flushed face, and blinking eyes that he had been drinking. He had a bottle of champagne in one hand, and a glass in the other, and was looking for some quiet corner in which he could rest and take his drink.

At sight of Striple and Eliot, Mr. Selwyn stopped short, and bestowed a sneer on each of them with liberal equality.

"What the devil are you two—blonding here?" he demanded. The question covered both, but his eyes were fixed insistently on Eliot. "Things are coming all right—a pretty pass what our servants dress themselves up—hic—and have the impudence to appear in the ballroom! You've no business—hic—here on the stairs, or the hitchen or the stable or wherever it is—hic—you belong. You can eat, and drink there till you burst; but you shall do it upstairs here while—hic—I'm master."

He waved his hand with an air of insolent command, and, his fingers being as unsteady as his legs, he dropped the tumbler.

"Here, you! pick this up," he said to Striple, kicking the broken glass towards him; "and you," he nodded as insistently at Eliot, "go and bring me another glass."

CHAPTER XXXIV.
THE TEMPTATION.

Eliot's face flushed, and he took a step towards the tsey idiot; but Mr. Striple clung on his arm, his eyes shooting direful glances at his master's son.

"No, let him alone! Not yet, Mr. Eliot, not yet! Go away, sir, go away, sir—it's tempting, I know; but you mustn't do it, not here, not now!"

Howling and scraping, he slid up to Selwyn and murmured, with his usual meekness, "Certainly, Mr. Selwyn; come with me; I'll get you another glass, and find you a nice easy sofa to rest on."

Looking over his shoulder at Eliot, and omitting a loud gasp, he disappeared, less than to be one of scorn, Mr. Selwyn suffered himself to be led away by Mr. Striple.

Eliot sank to the chair and rested his head on his hands. This affair of the Byworthy Copper Mine had not only startled him, but filled him with vague forebodings of uneasiness. He told himself that Nora was nothing to him now; she had married and disappeared from his life; but, notwithstanding, he felt that he had heard of her, and he thought upon the piece of knavery by which Sir Joseph had robbed her; for it was nothing short of sheer, bare-faced robbery, and he felt that he had heard had awakened his memory, his love for Nora, which, somehow or other, had slept during the time she was in London. And strangely enough, as he thought of her, the figure, the voice, of this lady of the night, crossed his mind and joined the figure and the voice of Nora, as form and objects are merged in a dissolving view.

Suddenly he felt a soft touch on his shoulder, and looking up, with a start, he found Florence Bartley leaning over him; leaning so closely that her face almost touched his.



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Surely you don't mind: you don't care for such a thing as that!" she murmured, in which he unjustly attempted to convince his audience that the yearning tenderness in her eyes, in the whisper which had almost sunk to a voice.

(To be continued)

The Two Unfortunate Princes.

On June 23, 1483, Dr. Ralph Shaw, brother to the then Lord Mayor of London, preached a sermon at St. Paul's Cross, in which he unjustly attempted to convince his audience that Edward IV. had been previously married to a Lady Butler, in consequence of which Edward V. being his son by Elizabeth Woodville, was illegitimate, and, therefore, not the rightful heir to the Crown. The congregation received this sermon in amazed silence, but London was practically overruled by the presence of a large number of retainers, of the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Buckingham, who were anxious to get rid of Edward, and his brother Richard, Duke of York. When Edward IV. died, leaving behind him two sons, and several daughters, the need of a regency was obvious. The young King was at Ludlow in the hands of the Queen-mother's brother and son, Rivers and Grey, and the young Duke of York was with the Queen herself in London, so that the advantages lay with the Queen's family for securing the regency to her. But they were unpopular, and Gloucester, who was in the north knew that he could count upon strong support in securing the regency for himself. So in company with the Duke of Buckingham he overtook Edward and his escort on their way to London, and forthwith arrested Rivers and Grey. The boy King was then led with a mockery of public honours to the city, and cast into the Tower. The Queen-mother was forced to part also with Richard, who was later committed to the same prison, and there the two boys, bused with their sports, lived all unconscious of the dark web which was slowly enfolding them, and which later led to their assassination.

Made Him Fed Up.

Three doctors were operating on a man for appendicitis. After the operation was completed one of the doctors missed a small sponge. The patient was opened, the sponge found within, and the man sewed up again. Immediately the second doctor missed a needle. Again the patient was opened and closed. Then the third doctor missed a pair of scissors.

"Gentlemen," said the patient, as they were about to operate again, "for heaven's sake, if you're going to keep this up, put buttons on me!"

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