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The Web;

OR,
TRUE LOVE'S PASSION.

CHAPTER VI.
The Artist's Model.

The earl shot a keen glance at Norah, who stood listening to the two men intently.

"My daughter has rightly interpreted my desire, sir," he said in his very best manner. "Art holds a passport which only the barbarian refuses to acknowledge. I beg you will consider yourself free to wander anywhere you please."

Cyril Burne bowed his thanks, and the earl moved toward the easel.

"May one venture to ask the favor of a sight of your picture, Mr. Burne?" he asked.

"Burne, Cyril Burne," said Cyril.

"Ah," murmured the earl, "I do not think I have heard the name before; but, indeed, I have been so long out of touch with the artistic world as to be ignorant of its most famous men."

Cyril Burne laughed shortly.

"I am one of the least famous, my lord," he said.

"Then your merit still awaits its reward, believe me," retorted the earl, raising his eyeglasses and examining the sketch with the appropriate air of critical attention. But as he saw the figure of Norah, he turned his glasses upon the artist, and then upon Norah with a veiled sharpness.

"Is this the first time you have acted as a model, Norah?" he asked, pointing to the figure with his glasses.

Norah smiled, and scarcely blushed.

"Yes," she replied, "and I did it unconsciously now. Mr. Burne was painting the dog."

"And presumed to add another figure," said Cyril, quickly, "and, with your daughter's permission, retained it on the canvas; but if you have the least objection, my lord— He took up the brush as he had done before.

"No, no," said the earl, evidently mollified by such prompt deference; "pray let it stand. Lady Norah is the best judge of the—er—conveniences,"—he said this as if he meant to imply that she was the very worst—"and if she does not object— He shrugged his shoulders slightly, as if the matter were really too trivial for elaboration. "Permit me to repeat my request that you will use any part of Santeleign you please for your sketchbook, Mr. Burne, and to wish you good-day. Come, Norah," and he raised his hat with a stately grace.

Norah bestowed a bow and a smile upon Cyril, who bent respectfully, and the earl and Norah walked away.

For some minutes the earl was silent; then in the softest and sweetest of voices he said:

"Had you ever met that young man before, Norah? Pray pardon my curiosity, and if it is unwelcome to you, do not gratify it."

Norah opened her eyes upon him.

"Why should I not tell you, papa?" she said. "Oh, no, I never saw him before this morning; and," she smiled, "I should not have seen him then if I had not overheard him and Mr. Berton—talking," she said, instead of "quarreling."

The earl looked up.

"Oh! Guildford Berton and he met this morning. Does he—Guildford, I mean—know him?"

"Evidently not," said Norah, "for Mr. Berton was warning him off as a trespasser, when—"

"You interposed and gave him permission to remain," put in the earl, dryly; "and to recompense him permitted him to insert you in his sketch?"

A faint color rose to Norah's face.

"You forget, papa, that I did not know he was painting me. He was taking Casper's portrait."

"Ah, well! Your friend is evidently a gentleman—"

"My friend, papa!" and she laughed.

"At any rate," he retorted, as suavely as before, "you were very friendly."

"Why should I not be?" said Norah, innocently. "Besides," she hesitated a moment, "Mr. Berton had been so rude, that I wanted to make it up to him, to show him that it was not your wish that he should be treated as he had been."

"I comprehend," said the earl; "but pardon me if I venture to remark, that you must have misapprehended Guildford Berton. He is incapable of rudeness."

Norah looked at the aristocratic face with momentary surprise. Could it be possible that the earl, who seemed so keen and incisive an observer, should be deceived by Guildford Berton?

"Guildford," he went on, "is a young man of great firmness and tenacity of purpose, but he is a model of courtesy and forbearance. I fear that the young stranger must have been the person guilty of incivility."

A swift denial rose to Norah's lips, but she suppressed it.

"Indeed," he resumed, "the young

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man appears to me to have any quantity of—we will call it confidence. Doubtless he will paint a finished picture from his little sketch, and it will be represented in next year's Academy as a portrait of Lady Norah Arrowdale. Perhaps that would not altogether displease you, however," and his lips curved slightly and sarcastically.

Norah reddened.

"I am sure he will do nothing of the kind," she said, quietly and confidently. "You said, papa, that he was a gentleman."

"A gentleman leavened by the artist," he retorted. "But we can easily set the matter at rest. Guildford Berton shall make inquiries about him, and if he finds his credentials satisfactory, I will, if you like, call upon him and ask him to dinner."

Norah fought hard to keep down the blush that threatened to rise in her face.

"I am quite indifferent, papa," she said, "and perhaps he would not come."

The earl was again nonplused.

"It is possible," he said, dryly, "but not probable. We will see. Guildford shall make inquiries about him. One should encourage art."

Norah made no response, and in silence they reached the house.

As they were ascending the steps, a young girl in a pink dress came from a small doorway below the terrace, and moved slowly toward the shrubbery.

She was a slim and graceful girl, a brunette, with hair and eyes almost black in hue, and Norah stopped and looked after her.

"What a pretty girl, papa!" she exclaimed, with the prompt admiration of one handsome woman for another.

The earl turned and adjusted his eyeglasses.

"Indeed! I did not notice. Ah, yes, I see. Was she handsome? One of the maids, I presume. And yet, I do not remember her face."

"I should so like to know who she is," said Norah. "She has most beautiful eyes and hair."

The earl raised his brows as if her curiosity about an inferior was inexplicable to him.

"I regret that I cannot inform you," he said; "but here is Harman, your maid; perhaps she can do so. Excuse me," and, with a wave of his hand toward Harman, which also served as a gesture of adieu to Norah, he entered the house.

Harman, who had come out upon the terrace, evidently not seeing Norah and the earl, stood shading her eyes with her hands, and looking after the disappearing figure of the young girl.

Norah went up to her.

"Who is that pretty girl, Harman?" she asked.

The woman started and dropped a confused curtsy.

"It is my niece, my lady," she replied, with an air of apology and embarrassment.

"Your niece?" said Norah. "What

is her name? She is a very beautiful girl."

Harman stifled a sigh.

"Rebecca South, my lady. We call her Becca. Yes, my lady, she is not bad-looking," and she sighed again.

"That is scarcely giving her her due," said Norah, with a smile. "Does she live here—at the Court?"

"No, my lady. Becca lives with her grandfather in the village, but she comes to see me—with the housekeeper's permission—my lady. She's an orphan, my lady, and I— she hesitated, "I look after her as much as I can," and an expression of anxiety and disquietude crossed her face.

"Poor girl! No father nor mother! I hope she comes to see you often, Harman," said Norah, cordially. "You must be proud of having so pretty a niece."

"Proud? Oh, yes, miss; but—"

Harman paused a moment, then went on as if explaining the pause. "Becca's a good girl as girls go, my lady, but inclined to be flighty and light-headed. If people would only not be so ready to tell her to her face that she's well favored it would be better for her!"

Norah smiled.

"It must be difficult not to be vain with such hair and eyes," she said, with such perfect unconsciousness of her own loveliness that Harman started and looked at her. "And I suppose Becca has a great many admirers and is something of a flirt?"

Harman shook her head assentingly and regretfully.

"That is it, my lady," she said. "Her young head gets turned, I'm afraid. And—and there is no one to look after her as she should be looked after. My father is old and almost blind, and I can't have her with me always."

"Why not?" said Norah at once.

"Why shouldn't she come into the house? I'm sure there is room enough," and she glanced with a smile along the great place.

Harman colored with pleasure and gratitude, then Norah saw her face fall.

"Oh, my lady!" she said. "But— but Becca doesn't know anything, and Mrs. Parsons—that's the housekeeper, my lady—will not have young girls in the Court unless they are properly trained."

"But one can't be born an accomplished servant," said Norah, laughing. "One must learn."

"Yes, my lady," assented Harman, "that's true, and Becca could learn anything, she's so quick; but—"

"Well!" said Norah, who saw there was still something behind.

"Ah, my lady, you'll think me ungrateful and Becca a foolish, uncontented girl, and I'm afraid she is, for the stupid child has got it into her head that she's above a servant's place, my lady. And it's such a pity, for she's so quick with her needle, and so apt at catching up anything in the book learning."

"I don't think any the worse of her for all this," said Norah, gently, "and if you think she would be happy, why shouldn't she come and help you with my clothes? I'm afraid you will have a great deal too much to do, and you would like to have her under your charge, would you not?"

Harman seemed speechless with gratitude for a moment, and something like tears came into her eyes.

"You are very good, my lady," she said, almost inaudibly. "And she will be glad to come, I know. And as to me—"

"Very well, then," said Norah, lightly, "that is settled. And, oh, Harman," she added as she turned away, "you may tell Mrs. Parsons that"— she blushed—"that I will pay Rebecca's wages. I am quite high," she laughed. "How much ought I to give her? Please tell me the truth, now!"

"Nothing, my lady," said Harman. "But if anything, very little, indeed."

(To be Continued.)

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"It is my niece, my lady," she replied, with an air of apology and embarrassment.

"Your niece?" said Norah. "What

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War News

Messages Received Previous to 9

OFFICIAL.

LONDON, Oct. 30.

The Governor, Nfld.

On the Verdun front, the French attacked on a five mile front and captured enemy positions to a depth of two miles. They retook the fort of Douaumont and Hill of the Quarries. Prisoners exceed 5,000.

On the Somme bad weather hindered operations, but we are between Guinecourt and Les Bois capturing 1,000 prisoners, and only 1,200 casualties. The French advanced at Sault Saillies.

In Dobruja, the retreat of the so-Romanian forces continues.

In the Carpathians the Rumanians have counter-attacked, capturing numerous prisoners. Further successes are reported in Macedonia.

An enemy raid on our cross-transport service failed. Two destroyers were sunk. One is missing and another grounded empty transport Queen was also sunk.

BONAR.

ENEMY POSITION RAIP

SALONIKA, Oct. 29.

On the Doiran front, on the night of October 28-29, after artillery preparation, the enemy position of C. Teuga, northeast of Machukov, was raided by our troops, who suffered considerable loss to the German Bulgarian trenches. North of Doiran hostile aeroplanes brought down. On the Struma to the west of Demir Hissar a transport park was bombarded by aeroplanes with excellent results. North of Ormanly our patrols had hostile patrols.

ATHENS, Oct. 29.

The torpedoing of the Greek Angheliki on Saturday night, with many Greeks aboard, was without warning, it is stated. This action is believed to indicate since the capture of Constantine man submarines have obtained supply of gasoline, enabling them to resume operations in the Mediterranean. The Greek naval officer

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Mrs. W. G. Dowden, Greenwood Bay, Nfld., writes: