

The Queen's Veil.

"Rather better than usual, thank you. And you—do not need to question regarding your physical condition," the earl said, while his eye roved, with a look of admiration, over the tall, slight form of the young man.

Lord Holborn laughed.

"No," he said, "I am always well, and I wish I could contribute some of my superfluous vitality to your lordship."

While he was speaking his glance wandered to the earl's companion; there was something familiar about the slight, graceful figure, the delicate throat, and the proudly-poised head.

Tina turned her head slightly at this point; she had been listening intently, catching every tone of that well-remembered voice, and as it ceased she involuntarily turned her face a little more toward him.

The young man started now, as he began to realize to whom that lovely profile belonged. His eye lighted, and with a hastily-spoken "I beg pardon" to the earl, he stepped quickly to Tina's side. Lifting his hat, he bowed courteously, though his handsome lips trembled with suppressed feeling as he said:

"Mademoiselle Florenz, this is an unexpected pleasure. Have you been in London long?"

"Only a few weeks, monsieur," the beautiful girl replied, with a smile that told him he was not an unwelcome sight to her, and made his heart beat more quickly than it would.

"How is this, my friend?" Do you know my little friend here?" the earl interposed, before they had opportunity to converse more, and he glanced in surprise from one to the other.

"I met Mademoiselle Florenz in Brussels," Lord Holborn said, "and he was trying something of the wonder he experienced at finding her there with the Earl of Carisburgh."

They stood there some time, chatting pleasantly regarding the many attractions of the metropolis, and at length Lord Carisburgh said they must return home.

"Come around and see us, Ernest," he said, cordially, to the young man. "I shall wish to hear of your travels and experiences. Bring your mother and sister also."

"Thank you, I will do so. And," turning to Tina and speaking in a low tone, "may I have the pleasure of calling upon mademoiselle also?"

Tina looked up into the fine eyes bent so earnestly upon her, and though the rose-tint deepened perceptibly in her cheeks, she replied, decidedly:

"No, my lord, I am only employed temporarily at Lady Arlesbury's."

"A circumstance which cannot interfere in the least degree with my esteem for mademoiselle," he said, with a wonderful look and a tone that was well-nigh pleading, while he could but admire the courage that she could not allow her to stand in a false position in his sight.

"My lord, you know that I have given you the only answer that would be consistent with the relation I bear and the respect I owe to Lady Arlesbury," Tina answered, very quietly, but in a tone that betrayed she meant what she said.

He bowed, and his face fell.

He knew that it was just as she said, and also that Lady Arlesbury, with her exalted idea of caste, would never tolerate any attentions on his part toward a hireling.

And yet his whole soul was filled with the image of the young woman, and had been ever since their meeting in Brussels. Not a day had passed that he had not thought of her, and he was now going back and learn more about her, and even now, in the face of her flat denial of his request, he was not less sure that he would see her again and know her better.

"Has mademoiselle any personal reason for denying me the pleasure of her society? Were she occupying a different position, would she refuse to allow me to become better acquainted with her?" he persisted, in a tone only intended for her ear.

She flashed him a look that sent the blood tingling to every nerve at this question.

"It told him how glad she would be if she could grant his request; it told him more than ever that she was aware of how much she would have been willing to acknowledge—that under different circumstances she might have been able to refuse his petition; but she quickly dropped her head, and replied, with a gravity that became her well yet with something of sadness:

"My lord, I can have nothing to do with what might have been, but what is."

As Lord Holborn escorted Tina to the earl's carriage he mentally exclaimed:

"These distinctions of blood and purse are all nonsense. I will see her—I will know her better."

CHAPTER XIX.

Tina and the young gentleman met again, and much sooner than either of them had dared to hope.

A few days after Tina's visit to the British Museum, Lady Arlesbury sent her to a lace shop on Regent street to match some lace that she desired to wear that evening.

While she stood at the counter making her selection, her several other people entered, although she was so intent upon her own purchase that she did not even look up at who they were.

The clerk seemed somewhat disturbed at having so many customers at once, as there was only one other to help him, and he was obliged to turn away, undecided which of two pieces matched her pattern best, he excused himself and went to attend upon the others.

A moment after some one came up behind her and tapped her familiarly upon the shoulder.

She drew herself erect with the air of an empress at the unparadised liberty, and turning round, she found in the presence of Monsieur La Fort.

"Ah, ma belle, so I have found you at last! You ran away to England, did you? Mademoiselle does not show good taste. London is one vile city—black, smoky, nasty. But one thing I can tell you, breathe here, Brussels is Paradise beside it. I think we'll have to take mademoiselle back to Brussels, settle a little matter of business which she forgot when she left in such haste—the little theft of which mademoiselle was guilty."

Monsieur La Fort had poured forth these remarks in his blandest manner, but with an exultant, sinister smile on his lips, while he watched Tina grow red and pale by turns at this unexpected encounter.

His last words, however, restored her self-possession at once.

"Monsieur La Fort's last statement is utterly false, as he very well knows," she said, proudly.

"But mademoiselle cannot prove that she will remember," he sneered, bending his face close to hers.

She turned haughtily from him, deigning him neither look nor reply, and resumed her examination of the laces on the counter.

He followed her, and continued talking in the same insulting strain, but in a low tone, so as not to attract attention.

"Tina paid no heed to him, was apparently deaf to every word, though inwardly her proud spirit was so chafed that she was nearly wild.

The man regarded her with a dark look, and finally laid his hand upon her arm again to attract her attention.

"Do not dare to touch me! Leave me instantly, or I shall summon the clerk to protect me from further insult," she said, coldly.

He laughed insolently, but under his breath.

"Softly, petite," he returned; "it makes no difference to me whether you see the grand girl; but be moderate, la belle, or we shall have an officer here to arrest our light-fingered lady."

She regarded him with ineffable scorn, and could not resist the temptation to land—at least, not without going through certain forms which I do not believe are worth the trouble and expense," she replied, calmly, and meeting his eye with haughty defiance.

He colored angrily; he had thought to intimidate her and make her go back with him to Brussels.

He had come to England on business with the very friend whom Tina was trading today, and his delight and exultation can be better imagined than described when he entered the shop and recognized in the graceful girl standing before the counter his fugitive design.

She appeared more beautiful than ever to him, and his infatuation was increased a hundredfold.

"You shall go back with me to Brussels," he cried, in a passion; "you shall go back and finish your work, and then I will deal with you afterward as you merit. Never in all my life have I been so disturbed, so annoyed. The royal laces must be finished or I am ruined. I shall compel you to go back to the superintendence of them—yet you shall not deny me this—I shall have my revenge," and he surely looked capable of taking it as he uttered this language.

"Monsieur La Fort, I shall never go back to work for you," Tina said, as calmly as if she were replying to the most evil question in the world. "The royal laces will not suffer for my instructions were very minute, and the work was so well under way when I left that there is no fear of its not being properly finished."

"But who will join the intricate pattern—who will give it the delicate touch?" he cried, and he looked at her with a look of intense interest.

"Monsieur must arrange that best he can," the young girl answered, calmly; but there was a troubled look upon her face—she feared the man, in his violence, would force out her resignation.

"Rather better than usual, thank you. And you—do not need to question regarding your physical condition," the earl said, while his eye roved, with a look of admiration, over the tall, slight form of the young man.

Lord Holborn laughed.

"No," he said, "I am always well, and I wish I could contribute some of my superfluous vitality to your lordship."

While he was speaking his glance wandered to the earl's companion; there was something familiar about the slight, graceful figure, the delicate throat, and the proudly-poised head.

Tina turned her head slightly at this point; she had been listening intently, catching every tone of that well-remembered voice, and as it ceased she involuntarily turned her face a little more toward him.

The young man started now, as he began to realize to whom that lovely profile belonged. His eye lighted, and with a hastily-spoken "I beg pardon" to the earl, he stepped quickly to Tina's side. Lifting his hat, he bowed courteously, though his handsome lips trembled with suppressed feeling as he said:

"Mademoiselle Florenz, this is an unexpected pleasure. Have you been in London long?"

"Only a few weeks, monsieur," the beautiful girl replied, with a smile that told him he was not an unwelcome sight to her, and made his heart beat more quickly than it would.

"How is this, my friend?" Do you know my little friend here?" the earl interposed, before they had opportunity to converse more, and he glanced in surprise from one to the other.

"I met Mademoiselle Florenz in Brussels," Lord Holborn said, "and he was trying something of the wonder he experienced at finding her there with the Earl of Carisburgh."

They stood there some time, chatting pleasantly regarding the many attractions of the metropolis, and at length Lord Carisburgh said they must return home.

"Come around and see us, Ernest," he said, cordially, to the young man. "I shall wish to hear of your travels and experiences. Bring your mother and sister also."

"Thank you, I will do so. And," turning to Tina and speaking in a low tone, "may I have the pleasure of calling upon mademoiselle also?"

Tina looked up into the fine eyes bent so earnestly upon her, and though the rose-tint deepened perceptibly in her cheeks, she replied, decidedly:

"No, my lord, I am only employed temporarily at Lady Arlesbury's."

"A circumstance which cannot interfere in the least degree with my esteem for mademoiselle," he said, with a wonderful look and a tone that was well-nigh pleading, while he could but admire the courage that she could not allow her to stand in a false position in his sight.

"My lord, you know that I have given you the only answer that would be consistent with the relation I bear and the respect I owe to Lady Arlesbury," Tina answered, very quietly, but in a tone that betrayed she meant what she said.

He bowed, and his face fell.

He knew that it was just as she said, and also that Lady Arlesbury, with her exalted idea of caste, would never tolerate any attentions on his part toward a hireling.

And yet his whole soul was filled with the image of the young woman, and had been ever since their meeting in Brussels. Not a day had passed that he had not thought of her, and he was now going back and learn more about her, and even now, in the face of her flat denial of his request, he was not less sure that he would see her again and know her better.

"Has mademoiselle any personal reason for denying me the pleasure of her society? Were she occupying a different position, would she refuse to allow me to become better acquainted with her?" he persisted, in a tone only intended for her ear.

She flashed him a look that sent the blood tingling to every nerve at this question.

"It told him how glad she would be if she could grant his request; it told him more than ever that she was aware of how much she would have been willing to acknowledge—that under different circumstances she might have been able to refuse his petition; but she quickly dropped her head, and replied, with a gravity that became her well yet with something of sadness:

"My lord, I can have nothing to do with what might have been, but what is."

As Lord Holborn escorted Tina to the earl's carriage he mentally exclaimed:

"These distinctions of blood and purse are all nonsense. I will see her—I will know her better."

CHAPTER XIX.

Tina and the young gentleman met again, and much sooner than either of them had dared to hope.

A few days after Tina's visit to the British Museum, Lady Arlesbury sent her to a lace shop on Regent street to match some lace that she desired to wear that evening.

While she stood at the counter making her selection, her several other people entered, although she was so intent upon her own purchase that she did not even look up at who they were.

The clerk seemed somewhat disturbed at having so many customers at once, as there was only one other to help him, and he was obliged to turn away, undecided which of two pieces matched her pattern best, he excused himself and went to attend upon the others.

A moment after some one came up behind her and tapped her familiarly upon the shoulder.

She drew herself erect with the air of an empress at the unparadised liberty, and turning round, she found in the presence of Monsieur La Fort.

"Ah, ma belle, so I have found you at last! You ran away to England, did you? Mademoiselle does not show good taste. London is one vile city—black, smoky, nasty. But one thing I can tell you, breathe here, Brussels is Paradise beside it. I think we'll have to take mademoiselle back to Brussels, settle a little matter of business which she forgot when she left in such haste—the little theft of which mademoiselle was guilty."

Monsieur La Fort had poured forth these remarks in his blandest manner, but with an exultant, sinister smile on his lips, while he watched Tina grow red and pale by turns at this unexpected encounter.

His last words, however, restored her self-possession at once.

"Monsieur La Fort's last statement is utterly false, as he very well knows," she said, proudly.

"But mademoiselle cannot prove that she will remember," he sneered, bending his face close to hers.

She turned haughtily from him, deigning him neither look nor reply, and resumed her examination of the laces on the counter.

He followed her, and continued talking in the same insulting strain, but in a low tone, so as not to attract attention.

"Tina paid no heed to him, was apparently deaf to every word, though inwardly her proud spirit was so chafed that she was nearly wild.

The man regarded her with a dark look, and finally laid his hand upon her arm again to attract her attention.

"Do not dare to touch me! Leave me instantly, or I shall summon the clerk to protect me from further insult," she said, coldly.

He laughed insolently, but under his breath.

"Softly, petite," he returned; "it makes no difference to me whether you see the grand girl; but be moderate, la belle, or we shall have an officer here to arrest our light-fingered lady."

She regarded him with ineffable scorn, and could not resist the temptation to land—at least, not without going through certain forms which I do not believe are worth the trouble and expense," she replied, calmly, and meeting his eye with haughty defiance.

He colored angrily; he had thought to intimidate her and make her go back with him to Brussels.

He had come to England on business with the very friend whom Tina was trading today, and his delight and exultation can be better imagined than described when he entered the shop and recognized in the graceful girl standing before the counter his fugitive design.

She appeared more beautiful than ever to him, and his infatuation was increased a hundredfold.

"You shall go back with me to Brussels," he cried, in a passion; "you shall go back and finish your work, and then I will deal with you afterward as you merit. Never in all my life have I been so disturbed, so annoyed. The royal laces must be finished or I am ruined. I shall compel you to go back to the superintendence of them—yet you shall not deny me this—I shall have my revenge," and he surely looked capable of taking it as he uttered this language.

"Monsieur La Fort, I shall never go back to work for you," Tina said, as calmly as if she were replying to the most evil question in the world. "The royal laces will not suffer for my instructions were very minute, and the work was so well under way when I left that there is no fear of its not being properly finished."

"But who will join the intricate pattern—who will give it the delicate touch?" he cried, and he looked at her with a look of intense interest.

"Monsieur must arrange that best he can," the young girl answered, calmly; but there was a troubled look upon her face—she feared the man, in his violence, would force out her resignation.

"Rather better than usual, thank you. And you—do not need to question regarding your physical condition," the earl said, while his eye roved, with a look of admiration, over the tall, slight form of the young man.

Lord Holborn laughed.

"No," he said, "I am always well, and I wish I could contribute some of my superfluous vitality to your lordship."

While he was speaking his glance wandered to the earl's companion; there was something familiar about the slight, graceful figure, the delicate throat, and the proudly-poised head.

Tina turned her head slightly at this point; she had been listening intently, catching every tone of that well-remembered voice, and as it ceased she involuntarily turned her face a little more toward him.

The young man started now, as he began to realize to whom that lovely profile belonged. His eye lighted, and with a hastily-spoken "I beg pardon" to the earl, he stepped quickly to Tina's side. Lifting his hat, he bowed courteously, though his handsome lips trembled with suppressed feeling as he said:

"Mademoiselle Florenz, this is an unexpected pleasure. Have you been in London long?"

"Only a few weeks, monsieur," the beautiful girl replied, with a smile that told him he was not an unwelcome sight to her, and made his heart beat more quickly than it would.

"How is this, my friend?" Do you know my little friend here?" the earl interposed, before they had opportunity to converse more, and he glanced in surprise from one to the other.

"I met Mademoiselle Florenz in Brussels," Lord Holborn said, "and he was trying something of the wonder he experienced at finding her there with the Earl of Carisburgh."

They stood there some time, chatting pleasantly regarding the many attractions of the metropolis, and at length Lord Carisburgh said they must return home.

"Come around and see us, Ernest," he said, cordially, to the young man. "I shall wish to hear of your travels and experiences. Bring your mother and sister also."

"Thank you, I will do so. And," turning to Tina and speaking in a low tone, "may I have the pleasure of calling upon mademoiselle also?"

Tina looked up into the fine eyes bent so earnestly upon her, and though the rose-tint deepened perceptibly in her cheeks, she replied, decidedly:

"No, my lord, I am only employed temporarily at Lady Arlesbury's."

"A circumstance which cannot interfere in the least degree with my esteem for mademoiselle," he said, with a wonderful look and a tone that was well-nigh pleading, while he could but admire the courage that she could not allow her to stand in a false position in his sight.

"My lord, you know that I have given you the only answer that would be consistent with the relation I bear and the respect I owe to Lady Arlesbury," Tina answered, very quietly, but in a tone that betrayed she meant what she said.

He bowed, and his face fell.

He knew that it was just as she said, and also that Lady Arlesbury, with her exalted idea of caste, would never tolerate any attentions on his part toward a hireling.

And yet his whole soul was filled with the image of the young woman, and had been ever since their meeting in Brussels. Not a day had passed that he had not thought of her, and he was now going back and learn more about her, and even now, in the face of her flat denial of his request, he was not less sure that he would see her again and know her better.

"Has mademoiselle any personal reason for denying me the pleasure of her society? Were she occupying a different position, would she refuse to allow me to become better acquainted with her?" he persisted, in a tone only intended for her ear.

She flashed him a look that sent the blood tingling to every nerve at this question.

"It told him how glad she would be if she could grant his request; it told him more than ever that she was aware of how much she would have been willing to acknowledge—that under different circumstances she might have been able to refuse his petition; but she quickly dropped her head, and replied, with a gravity that became her well yet with something of sadness:

"My lord, I can have nothing to do with what might have been, but what is."

As Lord Holborn escorted Tina to the earl's carriage he mentally exclaimed:

"These distinctions of blood and purse are all nonsense. I will see her—I will know her better."

CHAPTER XIX.

Tina and the young gentleman met again, and much sooner than either of them had dared to hope.

A few days after Tina's visit to the British Museum, Lady Arlesbury sent her to a lace shop on Regent street to match some lace that she desired to wear that evening.

While she stood at the counter making her selection, her several other people entered, although she was so intent upon her own purchase that she did not even look up at who they were.

The clerk seemed somewhat disturbed at having so many customers at once, as there was only one other to help him, and he was obliged to turn away, undecided which of two pieces matched her pattern best, he excused himself and went to attend upon the others.

A moment after some one came up behind her and tapped her familiarly upon the shoulder.

She drew herself erect with the air of an empress at the unparadised liberty, and turning round, she found in the presence of Monsieur La Fort.

"Ah, ma belle, so I have found you at last! You ran away to England, did you? Mademoiselle does not show good taste. London is one vile city—black, smoky, nasty. But one thing I can tell you, breathe here, Brussels is Paradise beside it. I think we'll have to take mademoiselle back to Brussels, settle a little matter of business which she forgot when she left in such haste—the little theft of which mademoiselle was guilty."

Monsieur La Fort had poured forth these remarks in his blandest manner, but with an exultant, sinister smile on his lips, while he watched Tina grow red and pale by turns at this unexpected encounter.

His last words, however, restored her self-possession at once.

"Monsieur La Fort's last statement is utterly false, as he very well knows," she said, proudly.

"But mademoiselle cannot prove that she will remember," he sneered, bending his face close to hers.

She turned haughtily from him, deigning him neither look nor reply, and resumed her examination of the laces on the counter.

He followed her, and continued talking in the same insulting strain, but in a low tone, so as not to attract attention.

"Tina paid no heed to him, was apparently deaf to every word, though inwardly her proud spirit was so chafed that she was nearly wild.

The man regarded her with a dark look, and finally laid his hand upon her arm again to attract her attention.

"Do not dare to touch me! Leave me instantly, or I shall summon the clerk to protect me from further insult," she said, coldly.

He laughed insolently, but under his breath.

"Softly, petite," he returned; "it makes no difference to me whether you see the grand girl; but be moderate, la belle, or we shall have an officer here to arrest our light-fingered lady."

She regarded him with ineffable scorn, and could not resist the temptation to land—at least, not without going through certain forms which I do not believe are worth the trouble and expense," she replied, calmly, and meeting his eye with haughty defiance.

He colored angrily; he had thought to intimidate her and make her go back with him to Brussels.

He had come to England on business with the very friend whom Tina was trading today, and his delight and exultation can be better imagined than described when he entered the shop and recognized in the graceful girl standing before the counter his fugitive design.

She appeared more beautiful than ever to him, and his infatuation was increased a hundredfold.

"You shall go back with me to Brussels," he cried, in a passion; "you shall go back and finish your work, and then I will deal with you afterward as you merit. Never in all my life have I been so disturbed, so annoyed. The royal laces must be finished or I am ruined. I shall compel you to go back to the superintendence of them—yet you shall not deny me this—I shall have my revenge," and he surely looked capable of taking it as he uttered this language.

"Monsieur La Fort, I shall never go back to work for you," Tina said, as calmly as if she were replying to the most evil question in the world. "The royal laces will not suffer for my instructions were very minute, and the work was so well under way when I left that there is no fear of its not being properly finished."

"But who will join the intricate pattern—who will give it the delicate touch?" he cried, and he looked at her with a look of intense interest.

"Monsieur must arrange that best he can," the young girl answered, calmly; but there was a troubled look upon her face—she feared the man, in his violence, would force out her resignation.

"Rather better than usual, thank you. And you—do not need to question regarding your physical condition," the earl said, while his eye roved, with a look of admiration, over the tall, slight form of the young man.

Lord Holborn laughed.

"No," he said, "I am always well, and I wish I could contribute some of my superfluous vitality to your lordship."

While he was speaking his glance wandered to the earl's companion; there was something familiar about the slight, graceful figure, the delicate throat, and the proudly-poised head.

Tina turned her head slightly at this point; she had been listening intently, catching every tone of that well-remembered voice, and as it ceased she involuntarily turned her face a little more toward him.

The young man started now, as he began to realize to whom that lovely profile belonged. His eye lighted, and with a hastily-spoken "I beg pardon" to the earl, he stepped quickly to Tina's side. Lifting his hat, he bowed courteously, though his handsome lips trembled with suppressed feeling as he said:

"Mademoiselle Florenz, this is an unexpected pleasure. Have you been in London long?"

"Only a few weeks, monsieur," the beautiful girl replied, with a smile that told him he was not an unwelcome sight to her, and made his heart beat more quickly than it would.

"How is this, my friend?" Do you know my little friend here?" the earl interposed, before they had opportunity to converse more, and he glanced in surprise from one to the other.

"I met Mademoiselle Florenz in Brussels," Lord Holborn said, "and he was trying something of the wonder he experienced at finding her there with the Earl of Carisburgh."

They stood there some time, chatting pleasantly regarding the many attractions of the metropolis, and at length Lord Carisburgh said they must return home.