

AS IN A LOOKING GLASS.

There will be a double advantage in this... CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.) I ACCIDENTLY RAN OUT FRANK FAIRFIELD to whom I say, "Frank, you are always ready to succor lonely women in distress. Are you not?"

"Well, yes; that is rather in my way," replies Frank. "What can I do for you, Leah?"

"There is nothing I want you to do for me, my dear boy. It is for Miss Yvonne the poor girl, in a most unfortunate position, consented to marry Algé Balfour. She has now written to break the match off, and is terribly afraid that when he gets the letter he will come out into the open and persecute her. She has confided in you, and I have promised to help her in every possible way."

"Poor little thing!" said Frank. "In what way do you suggest that I can be of any assistance?"

"Only in this," I reply. "You know Balfour very intimately, and you might easily write him a line and suggest that he get a really fit and successful attorney for someone else, he should not worry her any more."

"Who is the lucky sportsman?" asks Frank. "That is a little secret, my dear Frank. I will not betray Balfour's confidence."

"Well, it's not a sort of business in which I much care to interfere. However, as I generally do wistful or envious things, I don't mind obliging you. Think, dear Frank. Then do write at once to me."

"Well, you must tell me who—needless to add—at my discretion."

"Dear Algé, I am going to write you in a very disagreeable position. Now, you and I were friends at Etou, and have remained so over the years. I should think you would be glad to have me."

"I don't know so much about 'loves,' says Frank. "I reply, the girl has never confided in me."

"Yes, she has," I reply, "through me. She could do course, only do so in an indirect manner."

"All right, just as you please," he says; "you know more about these things than I do."

The letter is accordingly addressed and sealed, and leaves by the same post as Miss Yvonne's dismissal.

I am not wittily malicious, but I must say that I should like to see Algé's face when these two epistles reach him.

"My good days at Denison are very pleasant. The Gages give a ball to which half the country are invited; and as I meet one of two amusing people, and have no unpleasant meetings, I have nothing to complain of."

I have not seen a great deal of Lady Denison since I have been here, but she still continues most charming and kind to her former manners to me, and has also a civil word to say to me whenever we come across each other.

On the night of the ball she takes an opportunity of speaking to me, and from that day I am at an end as far as gathering the real reason of my being there.

"Dearest Leah," she commences, "you are one of the best friends I have in the world, and I can thoroughly rely on you in any peculiarly well-willed to assist me in my present."

"Go on, dearest," I reply, "I should be indeed ungrateful, if, after all your kindness to me, I did not go from here to the end of the world to do as you wish."

"Ah, dear," she continues, "it is about Miss Yvonne. I cannot myself understand my wild infatuation for that man, but that is quite another matter."

"I was desperately angry with you at Etou, when he found out, or rather guessed, that my simple feelings were the cause of your leaving so hurriedly."

"Is there anything I can put right?" I say.

"That's just where it is," she answers, "you can help me amazingly if you like. Miss Yvonne and I pitched up our own party well at the same time. He is shortly to return to the Belgian Legion, and is probably going to be long."

"I was just returned to town, and shall be at home to-morrow and Saturday at five."

As for Monte Carlo, I was already thinking of it, also such had had me made up my mind whether to stay there, or at Nice. You have almost done me, and I think I will go at once to Monte Carlo. It will be good to see you there at the same time."

"Consider it done, my dear. I will arrange to meet you at Nice. I will be there on the 15th. I will be there on the 15th. I will be there on the 15th."

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