

The provincial parliament had reassembled, the courts were sitting, and the little western capital was thronged with visitors more or less distinguished. The ball was held under the largest roof in town, that of the armory; the band had been imported all the way from Winnipeg, and the decorations and the gowns of the women would have done credit to Montreal itself. To the women the particular attraction of the occasion was the presence of an undoubted aristocrat, Lord Richard Spurling, seeing Canada on his grand tour.

Linda was radiant, the greatest little lady there! There was nothing here to suggest the frightened child who had left such a desperate note for Jack. Her world had not turned its back on her; on the contrary, she had made a grand *réentrée* with the halo of adventure around her pretty head. She was wearing a dress of rose-madder satin straight from Paris, a marvel of graceful unexpectedness, hanging from her thin, alluring shoulders by a hair, and clinging about her delicate ankles. She was wearing all the pearls that had shared her adventures, besides some new ones, and a jewelled aigrette in her dark hair. A whole company of cavaliers dogged her footsteps, including the lordling himself, a handsome and manly youngster, irrespective of the handle to his name.

Jack was not one of the company that surrounded her. Jack and Linda had been leading a kind of cat and dog life the past few weeks. Their engagement was admitted, but had not been announced. Jack did not