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Elaine the Fair

A Serial Story of Absorbing Interest.

Taking up the photograph Miss Beresford had given her, she went towards the door. There, turning, she said in a low, steady voice—"You can keep the photograph, if you like, but don't get it enlarged or a picture made from it. It is better, far better, that my face and myself should be forgotten."

"I will not, if you don't wish it," said Lisabel heartily; but when her friend had gone she pondered their conversation deeply.

They spent the morning out of doors, but Lucy was languid and distraite, and soon confessed she had had enough of exercise. Lisabel tucked her up with rugs and cushions in the little cart and turned the pony's head homeward.

"How kind you are, Lisabel!" said the poor girl, her eyes filling with sudden tears. "There is no one like you." But I want you to help me to get away from England altogether, to break entirely with the old life. I should like to go to America or New Zealand, or some place where I could begin a new life, for there can be no rest or safety for me here. It is wearing me out!" and she held up her little wasted wrists.

"With strength memory is coming back to be, and with memory all the old pain returns. I must go away. I will take another name, and in time I will forget and make a new life for myself."

"How would you like to be a nurse and then go abroad to one of the colonies?" asked Lisabel, who saw it was necessary at all costs to quiet her companion.

"I should like it," said Lucy with a deep sigh.

"Then get well as quickly as possible and when your nerves are back to their normal condition I will see that you get your chance."

Lucy leaned over to her friend, put her arms round her neck, and drew down her head until their lips met.

"There is no one as good as you," she said. "You have opened me a way of escape. I will put the past out of my mind and think of nothing but the future."

Lisabel drew up the cart at the inn door. "You are thoroughly worn out," she said, "and the first thing is to get down and have a good sleep. I will see that you get a good one."

"Give her a drink of milk and make her lie down. Read something aloud to her until she falls asleep, and then see she is not disturbed."

Half an hour later Lisabel announced that Lucy was sleeping like a child.

Lisabel got out her material and began a letter to Lord Brixton. She had not heard from him since she left London, for they had arranged that it was better that no communication should pass between them unless some unexpected conjunction of circumstances made it necessary.

But now she thought she had information which should be imparted to him. There were certain things which Lucy told her which might be valuable as clues.

After telling all about their life in Wales and her belief that Lucy was much better, though still far from well she continued:

"I enclose a photograph of Lucy and Elaine taken together. It may be of use. Of whom does Elaine in the picture remind you? I cannot recollect. Perhaps you can. There is another photograph of Lucy with the dog. As well as I remember, Miss Latimer told me that Elaine said the dog was destroyed by her uncle's orders, because he was afraid she knew nothing about this, and believed the dog to be still alive, and when I told her what I had heard she checked herself in the middle of a sentence and abruptly changed the subject and left the room. I am glad she has broken through her silence even in the small degree she has done, but I dare not press her for fear of agitating her. I wish—oh, so much—that she could be freed from the bonds that have been thrown round her. She is under promise of secrecy, I am sure, and she is afraid of herself beside. I cannot imagine what mystery she is involved in, for she herself admits, if such an admission were necessary, that she has done nothing blameworthy."

"She was quite excited when, in answer to her questions, I told her that Sir Everard was still stirring in the matter, still determined to discover the truth. She said I must tell him to give up the quest, that nothing but trouble could come of it. I did not let her see the paper containing my report of the accident. I hope things are progressing favourably with regard to the invalid. It seems hard sometimes not to be at the centre of things. Still, I believe we are right in saying as little as possible, especially in writing about Sir Everard, and I only break through my rule because I feel that there is something I have not fathomed in connection with the two photographs."

She had just reached this point in her letter when the postman handed in through the open window a long envelope addressed to Miss Beresford and along with it a letter with Lord Brixton's hand writing on it. She opened the latter first. A happy smile illuminated and transformed her dark face as she read the words of deep tenderness which for the first time in her life spoke from another heart to hers. A sentence near the end arrested her:

"I received an invitation from Miss Verinder asking me to spend some part of my vacation in Wayland in November. She says she is writing to you with the same object. If Miss Carden does not mind being left in Miller's charge, I think the best thing would be for both of us to accept. I shall delay answering till I hear from you. It would be a capital opportunity for us to see Miss Latimer and Grantly, who are both there. I am sure the former must be very uneasy at not hearing the result of Denham's journey. She may also have seen the report in the paper."

Lisabel opened the second envelope. It contained several letters forwarded by her man of business. Among them was one addressed in Elaine's peculiar handwriting. It was the invitation Lord Brixton had spoken of.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Let us have a last full-dress rehearsal this evening," said Elaine. All her guests were assembled, and the gallery of her portraits was to be exhibited the following evening to a large gathering of friends and neighbours. The old chests had been ransacked and stores of brocades and lace and satins yellowed with age had been turned out. Mademoiselle Guiletta had been invaluable, fitting, altering, and with unerring taste had decided what was possible and what impossible.

"A good idea!" said Lisabel. "But I warn you, Elaine, that when I see Mr. Cholmondeley opposite trying to look romantic as Sir Rupert I shall not be able to keep from giggling, and it would be awful for Lady Elgriha, the serious one, to say solemn, to be so frivolous. Couldn't you put me somewhere where I could not see Sir Rupert?"

"I'll have a proper sense of your own responsibility," said Elaine severely, "you would not be discontented by poor Mr. Cholmondeley. It is too late to make any changes now; you must think of the most affecting subject you know of and keep your mind fixed on that."

"The result will be hysterics, I prophesy. You might label me 'The Hysterical Ladye'—with an 'e', mind and then I should be all right!"

"No such thing! I am not going to have your name displayed. If it goes off well, we could give it again and charge for admission and make quite a lot for hospital or cats' homes or that kind of thing!"

"I must go up to the gallery again and look at my presentment. There are a few details I have not properly taken in," said Lisabel. "Will you come, Miss Latimer? I must have some one to put me in position, and I have had only a short time to practise."

"I will come too, if you will allow me," said Colin Grantly. "I have a decidedly artistic eye."

"Which one is that?" said Lisabel, looking at him critically. "I see no looking at him can come if you like on condition you discourage all frivolity in Miss Latimer. I really mean to stick to business. I don't want to disgrace myself this evening."

"I will do my best," said Colin, "but I have small hopes of either of you."

"What a pity Sir Everard Denham is not here!" said Elaine. "He did not even reply to my invitation. Is he out of town, do you know, Lord Brixton?"

"I suppose he is out of town. Do you know where he is putting up, Grantly?"

"No," answered Colin. "I have neither seen nor heard of him since—since, let me see—since the morning after that unique and delightful ball of yours at Mrs. Verinder's."

"It is curious that none of his friends seem to know where he is gone," said Elaine. "I have asked several people, and they are all equally in the dark."

"Come on, Gracilia!" whispered Lisabel. "I really want to do a little posturing."

They left the hall unperceived by Grantly, and proceeded to the picture gallery.

"First look at my favorite portrait," said Gracilia, drawing Lisabel towards the painting of the girl with the dog.

"Yes," said Lisabel, "I know it—the very image of poor Lucy! If she were here she would not need to make up to represent this—Lady Lucy's ardent too, married to brother of old Mr. Verinder. Her daughter married a first cousin, and Lucy is their only child. I have a photograph—no, I gave it to Lord Brixton—Lucy and Elaine together, but say nothing about it to any one. I have a reason—"

"Have you got one? I am so glad!" Sir Everard was very anxious to prop her children "California Syrup of Figs," that this is their ideal laxative, because they love its pleasant taste and thoroughly cleanses the tender little stomach liver and bowels without griping.

When cross, irritable, feverish or breath is bad, stomach sour, look at the tongue, mother! If coated, give a teaspoonful of this harmless "fruit laxative," and in a few hours all the undigested food passes out of the bowels, and you have a well playful child again. When its little system is full of cold, throat sore, has stomachache, diarrhoea, indigestion, colic—remember, a good "inside cleansing" should always be the first treatment given.

Millions of Mothers keep "California Syrup of Figs" handy; they know a teaspoonful to-day saves a sick child to-morrow. Ask your druggist for a 50-cent bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," which has directions for babies, children of all ages and grown-ups printed on the bottle. Beware of counterfeits sold here, so don't be fooled. Get the genuine, made by "California Fig Syrup Company."

Nelson Harrison, who deserted from the 33rd Battalion six months ago, was sentenced at St. Thomas to eight months in prison.

Two hundred and sixty members of the 51st Battalion, St. Thomas, have been given furloughs to assist farmers in spring work.

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came in, accompanied by Elaine and an elderly gentleman. "Mr. Bolton!" cried Gracilia, running forward. "How delightful! How very, very glad I am to see you!" She held out both hands.

"I was down on business in this part of the country, and I ventured to call and inquire how you were. I was sure Miss Verinder would understand the motive of my visit and not consider it an intrusion. He bowed with old-fashioned politeness to his hostess.

"You are most welcome to Wayland!" she replied cordially. "I know how my cousin prizes your friendship and how true a friend you have been to her."

At that moment, with a low word of apology, Mademoiselle Guiletta went quickly away. She walked in the shadow and covert of her face, but as she passed the first window Grantly not perceiving her approach, turned suddenly and knocked against her. She was obliged to pause for a moment in the full light, and Mr. Bolton's attention was attracted. He gave a sharp comprehensive glance and turned back to Gracilia, who was say—

"We are all busy just at present preparing to take part in an artistic entertainment to-morrow evening. There is to be a rehearsal after dinner."

"I hope Mr. Bolton may be able to remain for both," said Elaine, "and of course you will stay at Wayland?"

"Impossible. I am sorry to say," said the lawyer, "it is imperative I should be off by an early train to-morrow. My kindness and hospitality, I have taken a room at the inn in the village and have ordered a trap for the train in the morning."

"You might have given me the pleasure of entertaining you in my own house," she said reproachfully. "You could have had so much better an opportunity of seeing Miss Latimer too."

"One glance is sufficient to assure me that her present life agrees with her."

"You will at least join us at dinner?"

"Thank you, with pleasure! And Miss Latimer"—turning to Gracilia—"would it be asking too much if I proposed your walking with me as far as the village, and we can arrange the few little business details I have come about?"

"Certainly!" said Gracilia. "I should enjoy it of all things. I will put on my things at once."

"What character do you intend to personate?" asked Mr. Bolton when Elaine had explained to him the nature of the entertainment.

Elaine showed him the picture and he studied it carefully.

"Almost beautiful enough to make it worth your while to personate!"

"Do you think it like me?"

"Not in features, certainly, but it is in other ways."

"In what ways? Do tell me!"

"Need you ask? Such perfection of finish is rare in this world."

"Gracilia does not admire my model; she does not care for the expression, and Mr. Grantly thinks it hideous."

"Now, Miss Verinder, that is not fair!" said Colin. "I said her beauty was a kind that was fatally alluring."

"You said more than that. You left poor Dame Adrienne without a shred of character."

"What is her story? Who was she—do you know?" asked Mr. Bolton. "I have often intended looking her up in the family archives," said Elaine laughing. "But I think her charming, perfectly charming! She is my ideal of beauty."

(To be Continued.)

CROSS, FEVERISH CHILD IS BILIOUS OR CONSTIPATED

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