

UNDECEIVED.
BY HARRY NOLAN.
"You are not going to send any more money, Laura?"
Miss Daleworth blushed like one detected in an act of crime when her mother stern, grating voice sounded on her ear, and it was only through a special interposition of providence that she did not trip over the inkstand with the start she gave.
"Mamma, it is only ten dollars, and you know he has so much more need of money than I can possibly have."
"Has he been asking you for it again, Laura?"
"He has," she wrote that he was in very pressing need of money. His expenses were very great, you know."
"And so he comes to receive and use your poor little saving. Laura, I am more and more convinced that he is utterly unworthy of your love!"
Laura Daleworth sat silent, with drooping head and downcast eyes, but there was a sparkle beneath the long lashes which concealed those hazel-dark eyes, which said, plainer than any words, that her own mind remained unshaken, upon the momentous question.
"I am sure you misjudge him, mamma," she said, faintly.
"Child, child, there is a glamour over your eyes," purred Mrs. Daleworth. "He has somehow contrived to bewitch you!"
"He is so handsome—so brilliant!"
"Granted, my daughter, and so heartless, also!"
"Mamma?"
"Time will prove to you that I am right, Laura."
Miss Daleworth did not venture to argue the point with her mother. She was sure that Julian Vincent was a modern "charismatic" man, as she reproached him. And while she sat diligently at her dress-making, earning the little pittance which was her share of the weekly allowance, her absent lover in New York, she continued to look longingly forward to the time when, a prosperous city lawyer's bride, she should smile to remember the hardships of those chrysalis days.
"Mamma has no adequate idea of what his unavoidable expenses must be," she thought to herself. "Of course he must be at a nice place, and dress like all the other young lawyers, and keep up a certain style or he will lose all social position. A man like Julian should not lose any opportunity for a little paltry money!"
And so Laura Daleworth boarded up her petty earnings, and sewed away with a persistence which rubbed the roses from her cheeks, and peevish dark purple circles beneath her tired, gaze-like eyes.
"But it is all for Julian," she thought, and never regretted an hour of toil.
"Laura is looking very poorly," said Aunt Damaris.
"I hope she isn't going off in a decline, like Mr. and Mrs. Hawley," said Mrs. Jones. "Rose Ann took on just exactly like Laura, and coughed—lost all her appetite—and died afore fall!"
And Mrs. Jones nodded her head with a sort of gloomy relish at the dismal picture she had described, while Mrs. Daleworth shuddered slightly.
"Oh, fiddlesticks!" said Aunt Damaris. "Change in all she wants. Send her to my sister Perkins in New York. My sister Perkins wants a new maid or two with her business, and Laura can be killing two birds with one stone that way!"
Mrs. Daleworth looked doubtful.
"New York is a long way off," she said, and Laura looked eagerly.
"Oh, mamma, I should like it so much."
"Should you? Then you shall go!"
And Laura packed her trunk, and the little trunk, and then accordingly.
To the simple country dressmaker Mrs. Perkins' establishment reached gorged beyond description, with the Brussels carpeted parlors, plate-glass mirrors and room full of pale sewing girls beyond, while through all the fashionable hours the day carriages jostled each other in front of the brown stone steps, and elegantly robed customers came and went. And Laura contrived to secure a seat near the window, from which she occasionally stole a glance at the new, wondering, by any chance she should spy, in the crowd of passers-by, the face of Julian Vincent!
But she never did; and she was just resolving to send him her address and ask him to call, when late decided the question for her.
Mrs. Perkins bustled into the sewing-room one bright morning in September, and glanced her eagle eye around the group of girls.
"Miss Daleworth?" she said at last, beckoning with a crooked finger toward Laura's corner. "Want you to take note for me to the palace hotel—room 21, Miss Dorking?"
Laura rose, obediently.
"And mind you don't loiter by the way," said Mrs. Perkins, authoritatively.
"No, mamma," said Laura, coloring a little; she was not used to being addressed after this fashion. But Mrs. Perkins had a habit of distrusting everybody.
The palace hotel was a large building, full of bewildering corridors and halls that seemed to be built with the purpose of illustrating the old "labyrinth" puzzle of her childhood's days—and Laura was weary with manifold strains, when at last she ventured to ascend a white—proud negro man who was building—consequently pale.
"Sir—if you please—began poor Laura, and the colored man, apparently moved to a response by the civility of her address, stopped as suddenly as a skater checks himself on the ice.
"Room 21," faltered Laura showing the superscription on her note.
The colored man, who could not read a word, had it been to save his life, looked wisely at the letter.
"All right, miss," he said. "Do let me see it!"
"Come in!" called out a hoarse voice, as unlike the probable accents of any Miss Daleworth as voice might be. But some ladies do have deep tones, and Laura on the chest was also among human possibilities, so she opened the door and entered. The room was scented with a sickening smell of brandy and tobacco—a box of cigars and two or three soiled packs of cards lay on the table, while a gorgeous Turkish patterned dressing gown and a pair of open slippers lay thrown on the floor, as if their owner had just stepped out of them. A short, stout man with curly, red hair and close-cut whiskers, sat on the edge of one of the crimson velvet chairs, with his hat tightly wedged between his knees. Laura looked inquiringly at him.
"Out," he said, nodding his head. "You'd better sit down and wait. I'll be back in a jiffy." Laura sat down, accordingly, wondering what it all meant.
"Ore you money?" asked the bristly-headed individual presently, as he desired

some smoking the top of his ivory-headed cane.
"I came to bring a note," she said, timidly.
"It's queer, too," said the man. "Ore me money—ore every body money. Name pay any one."
Laura looked surprised, and began to wonder whether Mrs. Perkins would ever recover the amount of the bill.
"Ain't you to send it no longer?" said the stout man, viciously squeezing his hat. "Regular young swindler—won't put me off with no more fine promises. Hump! Gamble! an' drink! don't mean money, and I want to be paid, or I can promise him."
"He?" echoed Laura. Whom do you mean?
"Why, I mean the young jackanapes of a law student that lives here—a rascal he does—never been able to catch him here yet."
"Don't Miss Dorking live here?" asked Laura, springing to her feet.
"Miss Dorking! There, now!" cried the man, smiling his knee with his closed fist. "That's the man, the name of the rascal he's got to marry. I don't believe it. It's a confounded lie, from beginning to end."
"But—by way of finishing her sentence Laura showed him the letter she bore."
"Oh, you've made a mistake," said the stout man. "This ain't Room 21; it's Private Parlor 21. You'll have to go up another flight of stairs. This room belongs to Mr. Julian Vincent."
And at the instant the gilded paneled door was flung open, and Laura stood face to face with her engaged lover.
Face to face—and yet a chasm to the thick folds of the heavily-laced veil, which Julian Vincent did not recognize the poor girl he was so deliberately victimizing.
"A strange sensation," said Julian, as Laura came over Laura. She shook aside, and brushed past her handsome disheveled-looking lover, as if he had been a silly reptile, whom she felt would avoid her. This was the "garter" he had written to her about, wherein he was consuming the midnight oil over his legal studies, and cards and cigars and half empty brandy-cups were the "law books" he had written for money sufficient to purchase, and not rich heiress, Miss Dorking. Laura could follow out the stinging train of thought no further. She hurried up stairs, and never stopped until she delivered her note into the hands of Miss Dorking's own confidential maid.
"Tell me," she whispered eagerly. "Is—Is your mistress going to marry Mr. Julian Vincent?"
"Mr. Julian Vincent, indeed," said the maid, twining her head. "Not a bit of it. Miss Dorking don't throw herself away on the likes of him! She may flirt a bit with him, but when it comes to real earnest, the world knows she's engaged to Mr. Filatovs."
And Laura went her way, somewhat relieved in mind.
Julian Vincent never knew why it was that his supplies from his house in the rural district ceased so suddenly, and he was still more puzzled a few months laterward as learning that Laura Daleworth had married a young neighboring farmer.
"Luck is against me," said Julian. For Miss Dorking had thrown him over, and she looked very bleak.

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