


Useful for Over 500 Purposes



**GILLETT'S LYE**  
EATS DIRT.

Only a Beggar;

A Queen Among Women

CHAPTER V.

"Oh, I must, I must go and see the school! I'll have the children up here, on the lawn. And give them buns and milk. Nothing in the world is half so good as a bun, a real, indigestible bun, you know."

Mr. Fielding smiled again. "Oh, yes; I can see that you will slip into the part of Lady Bountiful, my dear, and that this pretty place will be soon overrun by noisy children—and snuffy old women."

Diana nodded defiantly, and laughed softly. At this moment, one of the French windows behind them opened and Mrs. Burton came out, in her quiet way.

"Are you sitting here without a shawl, Diana? You will catch cold," she said, in her low, nervous voice.

"Shawl me no shawls, Aunt Mary!" exclaimed Diana gaily. "It's quite warm—it's Italy in England! Come and sit down, and talk with Fairy Godmother!"

She put her white hand—there was now the glitter of diamonds, instead of ink stains, on the beautiful fingers—to draw her aunt down; but Mrs. Burton shook her head.

"No, I have a great deal to do," she said, and, after a nervous glance at the lawyer, she re-entered the house. "And Mrs. Burton? She enjoyed her long trip?" he asked.

"I hope so. No; I'm afraid she didn't. Poor Aunt Mary! I think she was homesick the day we left England! The months must have seemed very long to her. I was selfish to stay—but she would not hear of coming back till I, too, longed for home. Poor Aunt Mary!" Her brows came together thoughtfully, wistfully. "I wonder why she is so—so nervous, so full of nameless fears and forebodings? I had hoped that the change—I mean, all this tremendous sum of money, and the change of scene—would have dispelled her nervousness; but it has not. Do you know what is the cause of it, Mr. Fielding?"

Mr. Fielding coughed, and looked contemplatively.

"You are a strange girl," he said. "Most young women would have been only too delighted to reign in a big place, to make aristocratic friends, and—seize upon the advantages which such wealth as yours gives."

"Yes; but consider!" said Diana, leaning forward in her chair, and regarding him dreamily. "Only a few months ago, I was—well, just a schoolmistress at Wedbury, with eighty pounds a year, and lights and firing."

She mimicked his voice, and he laughed. "Then you came with the wonderful story of this inherited wealth, and I blossomed into a—hateful word!—millionaire. At first, it seemed as if I had inherited the whole, wide world. Then, presently, I realized that money cannot buy everything; that, though nearly every one bows down to it, it is, after all, powerless to wave the magic wand which lifts us to happiness; and—

Ah, well, I'm glad you didn't buy a historic mansion, and compel me to play the great lady. Here, at Rivermead, I can be 'a simple, single lady, living at her ease.' You are sure you have not told any one that I am—I am disgustingly rich?"

"Quite sure," replied Mr. Fielding, with a smile. "You can—well, conceal your golden hoof as long as you please." He stifled a yawn. "There is something in this air that makes me sleepy. And I have some letters to write before I turn in to-night. I think I'll go to the study."

Diana laughed. "Is that what you

straight before him.

"Your aunt is too old to be affected by the change," he said rather coldly. "I mean, that her early life, the struggles and privations—My dear young lady, you can look back at the little girl who watched the horses in the park, and smile. Fortune came to you before it was too late—strange to say! You can forget—well, no, not forget, but look back without bitterness; you are young. But your aunt—"

Diana looked at him wistfully, as if she were not quite satisfied with his explanation.

"Aunt Mary is not bitter," she said. "No; it is not that. It is as if—it is so hard to describe—as if she were always dreading lest something should happen; as if she were waiting for some trouble—"

"Hush!" he whispered warningly, as Mrs. Burton came out again, and put a shawl over Diana's shoulders.

"Your dress is thin," she said, "and the evening is growing chilly."

She was gone again, almost before Diana could thank her.

Mr. Fielding looked after the elder woman, with a frown.

"Mrs. Burton will be—better, now that she is back in England," he said. "How late the light holds!" remarked Diana, presently. "Look, they are only just beginning to light up in that house on the other side of the river. How big it looks, though one can only see a bit of it above the trees. Who lives there, do you know?"

Mr. Fielding shook his head.

"I haven't the least idea. But you will soon know, for the people will be calling on you before long."

Diana laughed. "Do you think so? I hope the natives will be friendly. But, perhaps—rather hopefully—"they won't call."

"They may or they may not," he said. "Of course, if they knew that you were—well, a millionairess—"

Diana made a little deprecatory gesture.

"Don't! I've taken a dislike to the word. I don't want to be sought after for—my money."

"I know, my dear young lady, I know," he said soothingly. "That's why I bought this small place—though it's a pretty expensive one for its size—instead of buying an estate with a mansion suitable for a person of your wealth. I might have purchased one of the historic houses—"

"I'm glad you did not, Fairy Godmother," Diana cut in. "I'm not ashamed of my riches, but—but I don't want to flaunt them. During our travels, I met some people who were all diamonds and gold dust—you know what I mean?—and I don't want to seem like them. No; this beautiful, this fairy house, with its quaint gables, and unexpected turnings—do you know, I lost my way in one of the passages—corridors, I suppose I ought to call them?—is more than sufficient for me."

Mr. Fielding regarded her contemplatively.

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call the dear little room on the left of the hall, the room with the bookshelves? All right. I'll tell them to send you in some—is it whiskey-and-soda?"

"Whiskey-and-soda it is, Miss Diana," he responded. "The drink that gives an edge to giddy youth and a support to venerable old age."

When he had gone, Diana leaned back in her exquisitely comfortable deck-chair, and looked before her with half-closed eyes. Not yet had she realized the change that had come into her life, and often, in her sleep, she awoke fully convinced that she was the schoolmistress of Wedbury, and oppressed by the fear that she had overslept herself; and was late.

She lay in a reverie for some time; then, aroused by the striking of the church clock—she meant to "do" that ancient church thoroughly—she drew her shawl round her, and, liberating herself from the embrace of the too comfortable chair, strolled slowly to the landing-stage.

The moon was nearly at its full, and the river—well, even "the minor poet" could not have done justice to it to-night. The water shone with the keenness of a Damascus blade. The shadow of every withy stood out like the tree itself, the murmur of the weir sang a mystic and soul-soothing song.

Diana stood on the landing-stage, looking out over the river, her spirit in perfect harmony with the scene; and it came like a shock to be suddenly awakened to the prosaic, by hearing a girl's voice chanting:

"If I love you, and you love me, And we love each other, then—How happy we shall be. For I love you

And you love me—"

She looked in the direction of the musical voice, and saw a punt coming down stream. A man was punting; a young girl—Diana could see her long brown hair streaming down her back—was half sitting, half lying, in the stern. She was dressed in white, with a shawl drawn across her girlish bosom, and on her lap was a fat pug.

The man was tall, and partly in evening dress; that is to say, he had taken off his coat and waistcoat, and had tied a handkerchief around his waist, so that he might punt with ease.

It was a pretty picture, and Diana regarded it admiringly and wistfully, because the young girl seemed so happy. And, for all her wealth, Diana had not, as yet, tasted perfect happiness; she knew that there was still something lacking in her life.

Loath to break their solitude—there was no sound other than that of the girl's voice—she drew back into the shadows; and, with a strange sense of loneliness, watched them.

The punt came swiftly down the stream, so swiftly that the nose of it nearly touched the landing-place. The pug leaped to the end of the punt, sprang ashore, and ran, sniffing and panting, toward Diana.

"Oh, Vane!" cried the girl in the punt. "Tabby has gone ashore! You must go after her! Aunt Selina would never forgive me if I lost her."

The man shrugged his shoulders, and sent the punt to the landing-stage. Then he dropped the pole, and stepped out.

By this time, Diana had conquered her nervousness, and, with the pug jumping up and yapping at her, confronted the man.

"I beg your pardon—the dog," he said apologetically. "Ah, here she is. I am very sorry—"

He stopped short, and looked fixedly at Diana. It was not only the beauty of the face upon which the moon was shining, but the vague sense of having seen it before, that arrested his words.

If he had not quite forgotten the young schoolmistress, who had rendered him such signal service on a certain night, his memory of her was dim and uncertain.

But Diana had recognized him, and waited—wondering. He frowned for a moment, in a puzzled fashion, then took up the burden of his apology.

"The little beast jumped off the punt—I drove it too near your landing-stage. Pray forgive it—and me—for trespassing."

He packed the dog under his arm, raised his straw hat, and strode back to the punt. Diana had not spoken. For some reason, which she could not have explained, she was glad that he had not recognized her. She had no wish to renew her acquaintance with "the wild Lord Dalesford."

**A Curse Or Coincidence?**

Curious Side-light on the War Between Austria and Servia.

In cold history the war between Austria and Servia will be set down as the sequel to a foul murder. With equal sincerity, persons other than historians might attribute both crime and campaign to a women's curse.

Uttered against him when he was a boy, the tragic misfortunes of the Emperor Franz Josef have fulfilled the course to the letter. Only one particular remains, the culmination as it were, and that this will be forthcoming during the present war is far from being remote as a contingency. Consequently, taken in conjunction with what has already happened, the whole affair has a very special significance at the present juncture.

It was in the year 1849—the year that witnessed the repression and absorption of Hungary—that the curse was uttered. Its author was the countess Konalyi whose husband had been one of the victims to Austrian ferocity. Her imprecation ran thus:

May heaven blast his happiness! May his family be exterminated! May his children be brought to ruin!

May he perish miserably and broken hearted!

When this terrible malisou was launched, the subject of it was only nineteen year on the throne. For a considerable time afterwards there seemed little indication of its dreadful desires being realized, but once tragedy did step in, sorrow after sorrow was poured upon the stricken monarch. Right and left, violent death or insanity robbed him of kith and kin, until, half a century after the curse had been delivered, the old man was left practically alone.

Here is only a partial list of the terrible happening that have shadowed his life:

Emperor Maximilian, brother—shot in Mexico.

Crown Prince Rudolph, son and heir—committed suicide.

Empress Elizabeth, wife—Assassinated.

Count Ludwig de Trani, brother-in-law—committed suicide.

Duchess de Aletou, sister-in-law, —burned to death.

Archduke Carl Ludwig—died.

Archduke Charles Louis, brother—died.

Otto of Bavaria, cousin—went mad.

Princess Marie Charlotte, cousin—went mad.

Archduke John, nephew—disappeared at sea.

Archduke Francis Ferdinand, nephew—assassinated.

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**Feathered Spies.**

How Pigeons Carry Information to the Enemy.

German spies are employing racing pigeons to carry messages to Germany, writes a correspondent. German trawlers in the North Sea have been found with baskets of pigeons. In France two Germans were caught redhanded in the act of releasing homing pigeons with messages destined for Germany on their legs.

As an illustration of the capabilities possessed by highly bred racing pigeons it may be mentioned that only last year a blue cock owned by a Derby farmer flew from Rome, a distance of 1,001 miles, and a blue chequer cock owned at Spennymoor flew 1,093 miles in an English long-distance test race.

The method adopted for espionage purposes is to write the message on a piece of very fine tissue paper in small calligraphy and secure this around the bird's leg with a thin and light, but strong, elastic ring.

In some cases it has been known that spies have gone to the extent of photographic documents on miniature films, which after being sent to their destination on their legs are placed in powerful enlarging machines and as many as several hundreds of words made intelligible.

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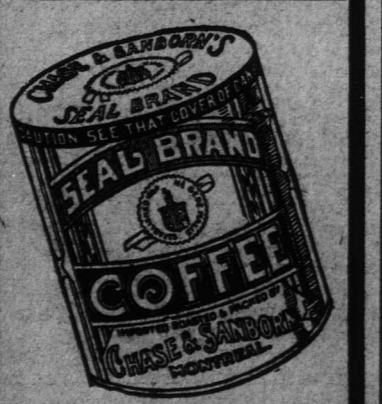
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