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FLAVORING EXTRACTS
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THE Lady of the Night —OR— Amelia Makes a Success

CHAPTER XXVI

ALONE IN LONDON.

"I am up in London on business," she said, "important business. What have you come up after me for? Is Moorcroft burned down? I shouldn't be at all surprised, Jacob's allowed same tramp to throw matches about. Well, I can't go back at once. I've most important business—Dear me! How pale and thin you look! You've been smoking! Now, don't deny it; I know you have; it always makes boys ill, and serve them right!"

If she had not been so anxious, Nora could have laughed at the grotesqueness of the situation.

"You've not had my letter, ma'am?" she asked.

"Letter, what letter?" said Miss Deborah. "I've had no letter; at least, I don't remember any. Did you write?"

"Yes," said Nora, almost in despair. "I left Lonsday with Captain Marks, a lump rose in her throat. 'Oh, was he saved?'"

"Captain Marks?" responded Miss Deborah vaguely. "Oh, yes, you mean the man who was picked up off Porlish—Whichever's the matter with the boy?"—for Nora turned aside and covered her face with her hands to hide the tears of relief and thanksgiving. "Oh, I remember; you were with him. It was very foolish of you, you might have been drowned. We were very anxious about you. It was very foolish to go sailing in a fog; but men are silly creatures, always so reckless and thoughtless. You must tell me all about it while we are having lunch."

It was then four o'clock in the afternoon, and Nora, instinctively falling into her old groove of guide and protector, led Miss Deborah to one of the tea-places where, if Miss Deborah had not been absorbed in turning over her book, she would have been surprised by Nora's appetite. By this time she had got to regard Nora's presence in London as a matter of course, and asked no further questions.

It appeared that the old lady had started out to do some shopping; but as she had long since forgotten what it was she wanted to buy, they walked about, looking at the shops, until Nora suggested that they should go home, wherever that might be.

"I suppose we had better," assented Miss Deborah. "Now I come to think of it, where are you staying, or have you only just come up? I can't think how you found it; it was really very clever of you, Cyril. However," she went on, "I daresay they can give you a room where I am staying—Brown's Hotel, Norfolk Street."

Nora, who had not the least notion where Norfolk Street was, fell back

on the useful formula, "Ask a policeman," keeping a tight hold on Miss Deborah's arm while she did so, got the old lady into a bus, and so made her way to the hotel. A room was procured for Nora. Miss Deborah had engaged a private sitting-room, and presently Nora went down to it. The old lady was seated at the table, with some papers spread out before her. She looked up at Nora's entrance, and nodded absently.

"Oh, here you are!" she said. "I am going over some papers connected with the business which brought me to London. It's business connected with a very old and dear friend of mine. I came up to see Sir Joseph Ferrand, but he is not in London. Fortunately there was a gentleman in his office who is acquainted with the business. He was very kind and considerate, and he has promised to come and see me and go into the matter, so that I might not have to go to that dreadful City again. Yes, he was most considerate; an extremely polite man, but rather strange. I forgot his name, a most peculiar name, but it doesn't matter; he'll be here—What is the time, Cyril?"

"Half-past five," replied Nora.

"I think that is the time he said he would come," said Miss Deborah.

"Did you get the money for the rents from Lonsday?" Nora asked after a pause.

Miss Deborah wrinkled her brow and thought for a moment.

"Oh, yes, Captain Marks gave it me. Why you didn't bring it yourself I can't understand."

As any attempt at explanation would have been hopeless, Nora was silent, and Miss Deborah went on—

"Speaking of money, you'd better take charge of mine, Cyril, or I am sure I shall lose it. As she carried her purse in the bottom of her reticule there was good reason for her fears. 'You had better get yourself some clothes—you seem to me to look very shabby. I must see you some more wages; but never mind that now; get what you want, and we can settle up afterwards.'"

As she was speaking, there came a knock at the door, and a servant announced—

"Mr. Striple." "Mr. Striple?"

Mr. Striple entered in his usual manner, his hat held in both hands, his head thrust forward, his huge nose stretched in a deprecatory grin. His eye darted from Miss Deborah's placid countenance to Nora, who was staring at him in natural surprise; and he seemed slightly disconcerted.

"My boy, Cyril," said Miss Deborah. Mr. Striple ducked at Nora, who rose and left the strange pair together.

CHAPTER XXVII

ELIOT'S NEW FRIEND.

Eliot was more than grieved when he found that Cyril had gone without wishing him good-bye, but he did not deem the boy heartless; he knew how much Cyril hated a scene, and that he had shirked the pain and the fuss of a farewell.

Eliot missed him terribly, and wandered about for the first day and two

like a sheep that has lost its lamb, wishing to goodness that he could follow the lad who had crept into his heart, and whom he had such good reason for loving. As usual, he sought relief in work. Cyril had not finished the plans, and Eliot went at them with a will. As is always the case, on drafting them a second time he hit upon further improvements, and he stuck at them until he considered they were fit to submit to Mr. Trunton.

Of course, he seized upon this excuse for leaving the island; but he had to wait until the boat came. When it arrived one morning he was surprised to see that it had a strange captain. Eliot, all unsuspecting the terrible news he was to hear, trotted lightly down the rocks and hailed the skipper.

"Good-morning," he said. "A different boat this time. The Happy Lucy is in dock, I suppose? Nothing wrong with Captain Marks, I trust?"

The man looked at him curiously, and then said gravely—

"Of course, you haven't heard, sir," he said. "Captain Marks has been very bad; but he's pulling round. It was a nasty shock, and it got upon his mind, as you might say. It's rather trying, but run down, specially in a fog."

Eliot, his face growing pale, stared at the man.

"Run down?" he said. "When? Not the day he last sailed from Lonsday?"

"The same, sir," said the man quietly.

Eliot put out his hand behind him to steady himself against the rock.

"The lad—Cyril! He—he was picked up also?"

The captain shook his head, and Eliot sank on to the rock and covered his face with his hands.

"Leastways," the man hastened to add, "I don't say that he wasn't; but nothing's been heard of the young gentleman. I'm sorry to bring such bad news, sir. It's the loss of the lad, the uncertainty as to what's become of him, that's bowed Captain Marks over so completely. That boy might've been his own son, seen the way he took on. Cheer up, sir; no news is good news, specially at sea."

Eliot got up, and crept away out of the man's sight. He was stunned and overwhelmed by the news; and it was some time before he could go back and get the few particulars which the captain could give him. He tried to assure himself that Cyril had been picked up; but his heart was as heavy as lead, and he endured a sense of bereavement as keen as if he had lost his nearest and dearest relative.

He carried the sad tidings to the farm and the quarry, and he had hard work to keep from breaking down. He could not bear to hear Cyril's name on their lips, and he got his things together, and so to speak, fled from the island, where he had been so happy, but the memory of which would always be associated in his mind with the loss of the boy whom he had grown to love so deeply.

On reaching Porlish he at once went in search of Captain Marks, who was broken and weak over the story of the wreck, and eagerly and anxiously discussed the possibility of Cyril's having been saved; but it was a negative kind of comfort, and Eliot, with a sad heart, went on to Mr. Trunton's at Newsworthy, intending to proceed thence to Miss Deborah's, in the chance of her having received some tidings of Cyril. Mr. Trunton had heard the news of the loss of the Happy Lucy, and was in no better belief that Cyril had been saved.

"It's no use your going to Moorcroft," he said. "Miss Rallion is in London—has gone there on some business. Now, about these plans, Mr. Graham—I shouldn't let this matter weigh upon me if I were you. He's sure to have been sighted by some passing vessel, and we shall get tidings of him presently."

With an utter lack of enthusiasm Eliot produced his plans and explained them. Mr. Trunton was more than interested.

"I believe you have hit upon a good thing," he said; "there's money in it. You seem to have grasped the thing pretty thoroughly."

"Cyril helped me," murmured Eliot, rather to his misfortune than to Mr. Trunton's.

"And, of course, we shall ask you to look after the business for us," Eliot shook his head decisively.

"Thanks," he said. "I couldn't go back to Lonsday."

"I shall go to Lonsday," said Eliot. "I may hear something of my friend at Lloyd's or the shipping office; but I am going to Moorcroft first."

"All right," said Mr. Trunton. "It isn't far. My man shall drive you over; though, as I tell you, Miss Deborah isn't at home."

"There may be a telegram," said Eliot.

"Quite so, quite so," said Mr. Trunton. "About London, now. There's a man there who can help us in this scheme of yours. You go up and see him, show him the plans and tell him just what you told me. Of course, I pay your expenses. Later on we can talk about a salary; we might arrange it by way of commission. We'll see about that. I should like you to go and see Miss Rallion, but I don't know whether address, nor does that old fool of a man of hers. She's gone off without leaving it; just like her: eccentric! I'll give you a letter to the man. I spoke of, and you can go on to London from Porlish. Here's some money; write, if you want any more. Pray cheer up, Mr. Graham. And after all," he added, as a gentle reminder, "the boy wasn't a relative of yours."

The colour rose to Eliot's face.

"He was the best and truest friend a man ever had," he said, "and he saved my life at the risk of his own."

He went on to Moorcroft and saw Jacob, who was seated in the porch with a pipe in his mouth. No letters or telegrams had come from Miss Rallion during her absence; and he could not give Eliot her address, for the best of all reasons. Like Mr. Trunton, Jacob desisted to believe that the boy was lost. Proffering hospitality, he asked Eliot into the house while the horse was fed.

"If you'd like to wash your hands, come upstairs," said Jacob. "Here, you go up, sir, and I'll get some hot water. I'm man and boy and maid in this house!"

(To be continued)

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I got everything in perfect readiness for a quick get-away the night before. I stuck the alarm clock under the bed, waked every half hour expecting to hear it go off, and finally fell into my first deep sleep of the night an hour before I had to get up.

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Surely there is nothing lovelier than a beautiful young girl unless it is a beautiful young morning. There was that heavenly freshness on the face of everything that gives a touch of charm to the commonplace and makes beauty transcendent. Even the town looked lovely as it lay asleep and once we passed beyond its confines into the country, with its apple orchards and its green meadows and hillside and its freshly leading trees just emerging from their morning bath of dew, we caught our breath for the overwhelming beauty of it.

And then I said, as some million of people before me who have passed through this experience of greeting the miracle of the new day have said, "Nothing don't I get up early often?"

Why is not so lovely, later in the day?"

The Answer.

I have asked myself this question many times, as some millions of people before me—in fact, every time I have been lured by force of circumstances into the adventure of early rising. At the moment I am never able to answer it. But the answer always comes to me later. Maybe you can guess when. At the moment when I am making my next attempt to get up early and am just about to decide that I would rather go back to sleep than have any pleasure the world has to offer.

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