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## The Old Marquis

### The Girl of the Cloisters

CHAPTER XXI  
A WEEK OF SUSPENSE.

He came forward in his soft, self-possessed manner and took her hand — by chance or intention she gave him the left, the one that Lord Edgar had not touched.

He raised it to his lips.

"I am indeed fortunate," he murmured, his dark, piercing eyes fixed on her. "It is the first time I have seen you alone for—days. I could tell you the number of hours."

"Please do not," she said, forcing a smile.

"I will not. I leave that kind of sentimental reckoning to ordinary lovers, to which class you and I do not belong, Edith."

"No," she said.

He sniffed the air with his delicate nostrils.

"Smoking? My simple cousin has just left. I presume?"

"Lord Edgar has just gone," she said; and she strove hard to keep her face hard and impassive.

Clifford Revel laughed contemptuously.

"Poor fellow! he is still in the depths of despair. He has not yet found his runaway lady-love?"

"So he says. He tells me that you are helping him to find her."

Clifford Revel laughed softly.

"Helping him not to find her would be nearer the truth," he said. "Poor Edgar! It is a pity he is Lord Fane, and the next to the marquisate! He would have made such an excellent civil servant."

"Why?"

"Because he is so trustful."

"Explain. I don't understand."

"No. I will tell you: there shall be no secret between us, Edith. My bosom lies bare before you, with all its secrets. My dear cousin employed me to find this lady-love of his, and of course I have not succeeded."

"Of course?"

"Of course not. Do you suppose I want him to find her and marry her? No! But I have found her, equally of course."

"You have found her?" she echoed.

He smiled and stroked her hand, little guessing that his touch filled her with loathing.

"Yes! I found her at once. She is not far off; but I did not tell him. I kept him in suspense! I know my man. Another week and he will have grown tired of the whole business. You understand? Quite tired of it. So that if he should find her then, he will have arrived at the conclusion that she was not worth seeking for."

"I see," she murmured.

He laughed.

"Give me one week more and I don't care. By the way, Edith, I owe you a debt of gratitude."

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"For what?" she asked, coldly.

"For the way in which you have interpreted my unspoken ideas. You have kept my worthy cousin amused and tolerably contented—and all for my sake! All for my sake!"

"All for your sake!" she murmured.

"Yes," he whispered, drawing nearer. "Take courage! Help me as you have been doing, and I shall be still nearer the coronet—my hands are within reach of it now! I shall grasp it presently, and place it on your brow!"

He would have taken her in his arms, but she drew away from him; and at that moment Lord Edgar was fighting with the chestnut and starting for his ride.

CHAPTER XXII  
A RUINED LIFE.

LORD EDGAR got on the great chestnut and rode through the park into Richmond, toward the pretty Surrey towns and villages that lie on the banks of the Thames—silvery here, and not muddy and murky as it is when it flows through the arches of London Bridge.

It was a beautiful afternoon, just the afternoon for a long ride, and he would have enjoyed it if Lela had been by his side, or if he had known where she was and what she was doing; but as it was, he felt inclined to go on instead of turning back. He dreaded the silence of his chambers, which seemed to echo with her voice as the voice of one dead.

He stopped at Kingston—historic Kingston—and, while the chestnut rested and got a feed, Lord Edgar sauntered up and down the street looking listlessly at the shops.

It was time he turned back to town, but as they brought the chestnut out, looking fresh and eager, the idea struck him that he would go on, put the horse up at some quiet village still further in the country, and get back to London by rail. He wanted to kill time, anyway, anyhow; so he turned onto the country road and still followed the course of the winding river. Soon the villages on this road grew smaller, the way led through avenues of trees and flower-dotted banks, and he knew that he was really in the country. A strange kind of peace fell upon him. As the sunset died away and the twilight fell like a silvery sheen on the landscape, the feeling grew more intense. His recollection of Lela and all that had passed between them became more vivid and distinct, and once he started, waking from a sudden idea that he was riding toward the Abbey, and that he should soon fold her in his embrace. He awakened to a sense of his loss, sighed and looked around him. He was in a long country lane, leading whither he knew not. The last house he had passed was a mile behind; there were no more in sight. The chestnut was still fresh, but he himself felt hungry and rather tired, and he rode up to a finger-post and raised himself in his stirrups to read it. He was on the road to Littleton.

"Littleton will do," he thought, "as well as any other," and he put the chestnut to a trot. After a mile or two he came upon a small hamlet, a cluster of houses round a village green; a blacksmith's forge vomiting sparks through its open door into the quiet dusk—a pretty picture, such as one might see in the Dudley Gallery. Lord Edgar rode up to the forge, and the blacksmith came out wiping his brow and glancing intuitively at the horse's hoofs.

Lord Edgar smiled.

"No, he doesn't want shoeing," he said, answering the glance. "This is Littleton, I suppose?"

"No, sir," said the man, eyeing the stalwart figure and handsome face of the rider with that open admiration which one strong man feels for another. "Littleton is two miles further on."

Lord Edgar felt disappointed, though he certainly did not know why. "How far are we from the station?" he inquired.

The man came into the road and pointed to the west. "Almost half a mile, sir."

Lord Edgar nodded.

"I want to get back to London. Is there a decent inn here where I can leave my horse for the night?"

"Oh, yes, sir; there's the Barley Mow across the green. They'll take care of him there, sir. Come from London, sir?"

"Yes," said Lord Edgar, looking on at the glowing forge absently. "I will go on to the inn. I think, unless I go to Littleton."

"The Barley Mow is quite as good

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Jan 15, 1919.

as anything you'll get at Littleton, sir," said the blacksmith, speaking up for his own place, "and nearer the station."

This decided Lord Edgar.

"You have got a pretty forge in a pretty spot," he said, in his pleasant, sociable fashion. "I'll get you to look at my horse's shoes, if you will," and he dismounted.

The man led the horse in and overhauled him. "All right, sir," he said. "He's a good 'un. It's a fair spin from London, and I don't expect you came slow."

Lord Edgar smiled and put a shilling on the anvil, got on the chestnut and rode slowly across the green to the quaint country inn.

An old hostler came out limping and led the horse into the stable, and Lord Edgar, after waiting to see him rub down and feed, entered the inn. It was of the simplest character, but scrupulously clean, and the landlady bustled to and fro and laid a high tea in a cozy sitting-room looking out onto the green and the ancient ivy-covered church. It was very seldom that so distinguished a visitor entered the Barley Mow, and there was quite a little flutter of pleasant excitement about the event. If they had known that their guest was the heir to the marquisate of Farintosh the excitement would have been intense. As it was, the good lady of the Barley Mow saw that she was entertaining what she called "a real gentleman."

Lord Edgar took what they gave him; tea at that hour—and a high tea—was rather a novelty to him, and he would have enjoyed it but for his ever-present trouble.

When he had finished he lighted a cigar and sauntered into the bar, and asked the next train to London.

There was none till ten o'clock; it was barely eight, and he strolled out into the fragrant evening air and sauntered around the green.

The whole place was so quiet that

it seemed as if the chestnut had put on seven league shoes and carried him a couple of hundred miles from London instead of a little more than twenty. The stars came out, and a half-moon rose from behind the church; he thought of that last moonlight night in the cloister garden, and his heart throbbed wistfully. He turned from the green, and, pushing open the half-closed gate, entered the church-yard. Peace serene and profound reigned in this out-of-the-way God's acre, and he leaned against the wall-ramp in thought. As he stood thus motionless and silent, watching the rings of smoke ascending from his cigar, he saw something glide along the path beside the church. He turned toward it absently, and saw that it was the figure of a girl; she was dressed in a plain black dress; and in place of a bonnet had drawn the hood of her cloak over her head. Something in her gait, in the graceful gliding walk, struck him, and he started upright; but at the moment the moon disappeared behind a cloud, and when the light came again the figure had melted. He smiled sadly.

"I never see a figure about Lela's size but I am smitten with the wild idea that it may be she!" he murmured, and he flung his cigar away and went down toward the inn. Then he paused; there was nothing to be done there—it would be better to wait in the open air, in the pleasant moonlight than shut up in the little parlor. He turned back and sauntered around the church. He had traversed three sides, keeping to the path, when, as he turned the last corner, he came face to face with the figure he had seen and so suddenly lost. There was not much light, and the girl started a little and swerved aside at the unexpected appearance of a stranger.

Lord Edgar raised his hat, and, as he made way for her, murmured gently, "I beg your pardon," expecting her to pass on.

But with a low exclamation and a gesture of surprise, almost fear, she stopped, and let fall a basket which she held in her hand.

Lord Edgar stooped and picked it up, and looked up to offer it to her, when he saw above him the lovely face of his lost darling.

For a moment he knelt motionless, speechless, fearing that his trouble had overturned his reason, and that this was the vision of a disordered brain; and in that moment she drew the hood across her face, and taking the basket, turned swiftly from him.

Her movement broke the spell that bound him. With a cry of joy and amazement he sprang toward her and caught both her arms, with the one word, full of love and entreaty, upon his lips—"Lela."

Panting and trembling, she gazed at him, her lovely face white to the very lips, her eyes suffused with a glow of passionate devotion, and—yes, sorrow!

"Lela!" he cried, drawing her near to him. "Lela! Oh, my darling, do you know me? Why do you look like this? Why do you not speak? What is the matter? What does it all mean? Lela, Lela! Speak to me!"

(To be Continued.)

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## EARLY CABLES

ITALIANS BEING SATISFIED.

PARIS, May 13.

The Adriatic controversy is nearing adjustment as the Italian delegates are no longer insisting on the fulfillment of the secret treaty of London.

AUSTRIANS ARRIVE.

PARIS, May 14.

The Austrian peace delegation arrived at St. Germain at 5.55 o'clock this afternoon. The delegation was headed by Prefect Chaillet and representatives of the French Government and the Allied and Associated Powers.

A CONTRAST.

PARIS, May 14.

The first meeting with the Austrian delegates presented a sharp contrast to the first meeting with the German delegates, because of its greater ease and friendliness. The delegation was headed by Karl Renner, the Chancellor. He appeared in the doorway of the car with his hat in his hand and with a contagious smile that put the reception committee quickly at ease. Dr. Renner, a plump-faced man with a black beard and bald head and with his eyes shining brightly behind a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, bowed courteously to the reception committee. There was no hand-shaking.

WILL NOT BE RECOGNIZED.

LONDON, May 14.

Representatives of the Irish-American Societies of the United States will not be received by Premier Lloyd George on his return to Paris, or be accorded official or semi-official recognition. Col. House, who had promised to arrange an interview with the British Premier, now declines to do so on account of the delegation's activities in Ireland.

GERMAN PROTESTS.

PARIS, May 14.

The answers of the Council of Four to the German notes, on prisoners of war and other subjects, were delivered this afternoon. One of the latter German notes dealing with the economic clauses of the treaty, declared that they mean the ruin of Germany if they are enforced. A note on territorial questions protests particularly against the Saare Valley arrangement and the transfer of the Malmedy, Moresnet and Eupon districts to Belgium, as well as the forced evacuation of a part of Schleswig.

EBERT ATTACKS WILSON.

BERLIN, May 11.

(By way of New York. Delayed Cable).—President Ebert denounced the terms of the Peace Treaty as contemplating the physical, moral and intellectual paralysis of the German people. He attacked the President Wilson bitterly and declared the Government would hold out against the terms to the end.

A ROMANIAN REMINDER.

BERNE, May 13.

Romania considers the peace terms given Germany severe, but just, and less severe than Germany imposed upon Rumania a year ago, the Rumanian Press Bureau here announces. It is recalled that the German plenipotentiaries made this remark to the Rumanians: "The conditions imposed upon you are mild."

WASTE OF TIME.

PARIS, May 14.

The German peace delegation is busy preparing voluminous counter proposals for submission to the Allied and Associated Powers as substitute terms of the peace treaty. Several economic subcommittees of the delegation met to-day, including one on coal supplies.

PARIS COMMENT.

PARIS, May 14.

Commenting upon the meeting of the German National Assembly in Berlin, the French newspapers point out that underlying an apparent unanimity against the peace terms were characteristic indications of a division between the Government and the members of the Assembly. In view of this the newspapers express the belief that a German Government crisis may be imminent. As to the speech of Philipp Scheidmann, the

Miss Information.

SEE I GOTTA GET T' THAT GAME SOME WAY!!

OPINION GAME OF THE HOUR TODAY