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**A True
Diamond**

CHAPTER XVIII.
Paving the Way.

(Continued.)
"Do you mean to say that that meek Miss Crump has found a lover? Well, I should not have given her credit for it."
"Uncle Dove, you mustn't talk like that. It's a romance, a beautiful romance! They met as children, and parted because they were too poor to marry."
"My dear Toney, you ought to be a novelist."
"It's earnest, Uncle Dove. But poverty is nothing when people love each other; but I wish they could have the wonderful basket of Gwyndheu Gar-anhr."
"Eh?"
"It's in that old book of Pups I told you about. If you put food in that basket, enough for one man, when you opened it again, you found enough for a hundred."

"Vastly convenient!"
"There was the horn too, and whatever wine you wanted to drink, you immediately found it; and there was a chess-board where the pieces were of gold and silver, and played of themselves, oh, and Arthur's cloak! Whoever had it on could see everything and no one could see him."
"That might be a useful covering for you, Toney; and so Miss Crump has picked up a King Arthur! That really beats me."
"Uncle, you'll give her a fine wedding present, won't you? She has served you for fifteen years, you know!"
"Me! Anyhow, Toney, I'll let you choose it."
"Oh, you are good! That beautiful red dress might come in useful for the wedding. There's the prayer-bell, and we must be down in time. And, Uncle Dove, you are quite sure this chair looks suitable for—you know?"
"Quite sure; I only wish, Toney, that—"
"Please don't laugh; I'm in real earnest. Good-bye." This farewell was given on the top of the balcony, and to Sir Evas' surprise, he saw his poor relation sliding down the rest of the way at an alarming speed.

CHAPTER XIX.
The Unexpected.
"As I'm going past the Vicarage,

Lady Dove, may I take Miss Antonia there? My brother prefers walking and you will, at least, know she is safely housed for the morning."
So spoke the General, and Lady Dove was profuse in her thanks.
"But you start rather early, dear General. Still, it will release Miss Crump, who is very busy to-day."
Toney was accordingly informed of the plan, and she was not at all sorry for she wanted to remind the dear General about the living. Men promised so easily, but forgot so soon. That was Toney's verdict of the stronger sex. When the dog-cart came round Toney was quickly in her place.
"I'll drive, Jim," she said. "I want some special last words with the General. He's not nervous now."
Happily for Toney Lady Dove had a slight cold, and did not come to the front door to interfere with Toney's orders.
"You are not frightened now, are you, General Stone? Pups said he had taught me to ride, to speak the truth, and to shoot, and he hoped the future would do all the rest for me."
The General laughed.
"You father was a good master evidently, but he did not remember that ordinary young ladies are not taught these last two accomplishments. As we have a good deal of spare time I want to drive first to your mission-

ary's lodgings, Toney."
"Do you?" said Toney, opening her eyes. "You really mean it? I thought you had forgotten. I should like you to see him, just to notice what a beautiful face he has. General Stone, please stoop down, I want to tell you something which will please you very much. I've told Miss Crump, and she did not faint."
"Ah! and so you have broken the ice?"
"Yes; but she looks ill this morning; she has not slept at all, I fear. I can't make up my mind about their meeting. I thought that coming home to-day from Waycott Hall we might go by Winchley, but then there must be a chaperon I think. At least, at home we didn't bother about such things, but here it's different."
"They are sure to meet in time, Toney, without your intervention."
"I don't know. Crumpet hardly ever goes out alone. She gets no real exercise, that's why she is so pale and nervous, but she really is improving."
"Well, Toney, what is your idea about your own future?"
"I have quite decided. I must take Crumpet's place. It will save Aunt Dove twenty pounds a year. She likes saving, and then I really know what she wants. If I get up early and do gymnastics, I think I can bear it. Then I can do all kinds of things which Crumpet can't do to keep up my stamina. Yes, that's quite settled."
"I don't think you will like it."
"No, I shan't like it, but you see poor relations aren't supposed to have likes and dislikes. Crumpet hasn't any."
"You had better let her go on where she is. She is accustomed to it by this time."
Toney laughed heartily.
"Accustomed to it! That's just the reason she ought to go. Oh, I can make myself happy anywhere really. At least, I hope so. Pups wouldn't ever let me cry except for something really sad; he said he hated feminine tears. He said you never saw a really great person indulge in tears."
"Bess is going rather fast, don't you think?"
"She's all right. Look, here we are. How shall you begin? You must send up your card, and say you are a friend of mine."
Bess pulled up before the family draper's door, and Toney saw the General alight. Jim went to the horse's head, and Toney began to think.
It did not seem very long before the General came back again, and they drove on to the station.
"Well," said Toney eagerly. "Isn't he like King Arthur?"
"King Arthur wasn't a clergyman, was he? But certainly Mr. Faber looks a nice sort of fellow."
"And wasn't he delighted at the interest you took in him?"
"I said it was as your friend, Toney, that I wished to speak to him."
"Oh, well, I thought you were really interested yourself."
Toney was a little disappointed with the General.
"Yes, certainly I am. We must see what can be done. I'll write to Waycott. He remembers him well."
"And you won't be too long, will you? The course of true love must be made to flow quickly, besides—"
"Besides what? The world is not quite so quickly moved as you imagine."
"Well, you see, I might repent about the situation."
"Here we are, Toney, and you had better drive back at once to the Vicarage. I hope you will pay as much attention as you can to Mr. Hales' wisdom."
"I must make haste to learn all I can. I can't go on with any studies when I've taken Crumpet's place."
"Indeed you can't. Good-bye, Toney. When I next come, or if I next come—"
"Why if?"
"I may die suddenly. The doctors say that my heart complaint may terminate without previous warning."
"Well, that's the happiest death possible. Pups said, but if doctors pull long faces you are sure to live. If you're ill, I'll come and nurse you. Do let me. I can nurse people first-rate."
"Thank you, but I should never know if you were going out of the door or out of the window. Good-bye, child. God bless you."

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