

A Great Intrigue,

Mistress of Darracourt.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Because I like plotting, and because I should have had him under my thumb. But enough of all this. Lucille will give you all the particulars. And now about myself. Will you marry me, my Lord?" and she dropped him a curtsy.

He looked at her, scarcely believing his senses.

"No? I fancied not, but I thought I ought to give you the chance. You can't marry Lucille, you know."

His face paled to whiteness, and his eyes flashed.

"Oh, woman! woman!" he cried. "Have you no pity? Is it not enough that you have wrecked both our lives, that you must come and gloat over your work?" and he covered his face with his hands.

She regarded him in silence for a moment with a strange look on her face.

"You really love her so much?" she said, in a low voice. "Strange! What is this thing, love? Thank Heaven, I know nothing about it! What fools it makes of you, men and women alike! If you hadn't loved her so well, you would not have run away; all my plotting would have been—puff! and you and she would have been man and wife. And now—well, good-by. Lucille and the two old women have just sent me off with something as nearly like a curse as ladies permit themselves, and you, I suppose, will follow suit. Good-by. I am going to begin the world afresh. Heigh ho! what will become of Marie Verner, I wonder?" and with a laugh that had a false ring in it, notwithstanding her bravado, she turned away.

"Stop!" he said. "Go to Mr. Head; provision shall be made—" he could say no more.

"Really!" she said, looking at him. "You will give me a fresh start? Harry!"—she stopped and stole closer to him, and her voice dropped—"Harry—my lord—it is just as well I did not marry you, for I should have learned to love you and—been miserable!"

It was the last word he ever heard from her. When he looked round to force himself—remembering her sex to say good-by, she had gone.

He wanted to regain his composure, then went into the house. The news had spread throughout the place, Heaven knows how, and the servants understood that the master they had hated was an impostor, and that Harry Herne was the real marquis. He had always been popular with them, with every man and boy and woman in the place, and when he appeared in the Hall a murmur of gratification ran round. They would have cheered but for the solemn silence that reigned over the vast house, and that they knew their beloved mistress was mourning upstairs.

"Will you ask the marchioness if she will see me for a moment?" he asked one of the maids.

"Yes, my lord," she said, dropping him a deep curtsy.

"Wait!" said Harry, and he held up his hand. "I am not—" he stopped short and frowned. "Do not call me so! I am Harry Herne."

"Yes, my lord," they assented; and, seeing that it was no use to argue with them, he went slowly up the stairs.

They led him to Lucille's room, and

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he entered.

She was sitting between Lady Farnley and Mrs. Dalton, and the former, as they rose to leave the room held out her hand.

"Harry! It is too sudden to realize; but—but I should be so happy but for her! Be gentle with her."

He pressed her hand without a word, and stood before Lucille. As he looked down at her, still marvelously beautiful, more precious in his eyes because so far removed from him, his heart went toward her, and he knelt at her feet.

She caught his arm and hid her face upon it.

"Harry! Harry! Can you forgive me? Oh, Harry, what have I done, what have I done?"

"Hush!" he murmured, tenderly. "There shall be no word of forgiveness between us if you—if you still care to remember the past! Forgive! When I think but that for my folly—" he stopped and choked back a sigh that was almost a sob. "But it is not of the past I want to speak, Lucille, but of the future!"

"The future! The future!" she echoed, with despair.

"Yes," he said. "Lucille, have no fear! I know upon what dread thought your heart is dwelling. But have no fear. He has given you your freedom!"

She gasped and raised her wet eyes to his face.

"See!" he said. "There it is! He has promised to leave you until you send for him!"

"Until I send!" She put her hand to her throat. "Harry, when I think that I am that man's wife, I feel that any death the most merciful could devise would be mercy itself to life! But I will go—you are lord here now. That is the only gleam of light in the darkness, Harry. I will go and hide myself until death comes and takes pity on me!"

"Hush!" he said, once more, and he held her hand tightly. "Do you think you owe me anything, Lucille?"

"Owe!"

"Then you can pay it all, ay! and with interest. Will you grant me my request?"

"What is there I will not do for you?" she said, in a low, still voice.

"Do this," he said, solemnly: "remain here in my stead. Remain here still the Lady of Darracourt. Look after my people—nay, they are yours still. Live for others, forget the past, forget him and—forget me!"

(To be Continued.)

A reminiscence of the oriental fashion of a few years ago is the heavily beaded ornament for the gir-

Only a Beggar;

BUT

A Queen Among Women

CHAPTER I.

"Oh, quite—or nearly," replied Diana. "Of course, there are many things I want; oh, ever so many. For instance, I should like a larger playground, a separate room for the children; a girl's gymnasium, a laboratory—"

"Oh, the school!" broke in Mrs. Burton, with a listless impatience. "I was speaking of yourself. It's lonely here;" she looked round for an instant, but her eyes, with their intent look, came back to the girl's face. "You never see any one but the rector or the school inspector; never go any where but to Lowminster—"

"And very seldom there," said Diana. "Oh, yes, it's quiet enough; and sometimes I feel just a little dull; but it might be so much worse. Do you remember?"—her voice grew low and a little tremulous—"do you remember the time in that attic in London, Aunt Mary, when we had only two shillings and tenpence left?"

Mrs. Burton's face paled and her lips twitched.

"And we should have had no money for the rent if you had not received some by post? Do you know, Aunt Mary, I often wonder where that money came from so opportunely," she broke off.

Mrs. Burton rose quickly and turned away to place the kettle on the fire. "It was money owing to me," she said, in a dry voice. "I suppose you want the table. I'd better clear it off."

"I'll help you," said Diana, promptly.

"No, no, you sit still," said the elder woman. "You sit still; you're tired."

"I hope not; for I've a great deal to do between now and by-by. I've all the children's exercises to correct."

When the table was cleared she got the books out and began work. The light faded and the rays of the early moon poured a silvery glow on her bent head and pale cheek. She rose to light the lamp, but paused at the open door and gazed out on the fairy-like scene. It was too tempting to be resisted, and Diana, flinging one of Aunt Mary's precious antimacassars over her head, went out. A belated bird, who had been deceived by the unusually warm spring day, was singing in one of the elms, and, listening to it half unconsciously, Diana sauntered through the garden and down the road.

It was a night for dreams; and Diana was dreaming of the past which Mrs. Burton's words had recalled. As far back as she could remember, she and Aunt Mary had lived alone together. Of her parents, Diana knew next to nothing. They had died, so Aunt Mary had said, when Diana was quite a child, and had left her to Mrs. Burton's care. The aunt and niece had lived the hard and grinding life of the self-respecting poor; but, though it had left its mark upon the elder woman, it had spared the child, who had fought her way through the squalid surroundings of a dreary London back street to the school-house in the little village of Wedbury.

Diana, as she walked slowly down the road, scented with the blackthorn and the primrose, and thrilling with the notes of the birds, shuddered as she recalled that attic in London; and asked herself why she was not even more happy and grateful for the change that had come into her life.

She found his box at last, lit his cigar, and handed a match up to his companion; but he seemed to be really doubtful as to his ability to return to his seat, and leaned against the body of the cart with indolent indifference.

"Yes; it was a warm evening," he said, with a laugh; "but if we're a bit bad, what about Dalesford? He's drunk twice as much as we have."

"Oh, Dalesford!" exclaimed Grayson, with a short laugh. "He can take twice as much. But he went the pace to-night, right enough."

"He must have lost pretty heavily," remarked Mortimer.

"That wouldn't matter. He never cares whether he wins or loses."

"That's as well, seeing that he usually loses," commented Mortimer, dryly. "He's had a long and a bad bout this time. By George! it would have knocked most of us under; but Dalesford's got the stamina of a horse, and is as hard as nails."

"Come on up," said Grayson, with good-natured impatience, "or we shall have him running into us."

"Is he driving?" asked Mortimer, as he climbed with tipsy carelessness into the cart.

"No, riding!"

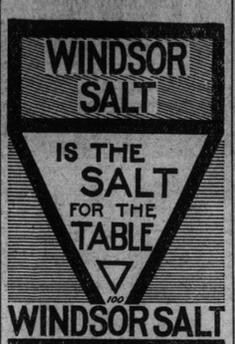
"Phew!" was the significant comment. "I wouldn't insure him!"

"Your money would be safe enough," said Grayson. "Hold on tight, Mortimer! Get up old lady!"

Diana waited until they had driven off, then went slowly toward the cottage.

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"But this isn't finishing the exercise," she murmured. "I must go back. To-morrow there will be no work to do. A whole week's holiday! I wonder whether the children will be as tired of it as I shall be!"

She stopped at the bend of the road and looked down at the reddish haze rising from the town of Lowminster that lay in a hollow five miles away. It was a garrison town, and consequently, a gay one; with plenty of shops, a theatre, and a music-hall; but Wedbury lay outside the line of railway, and the quiet village was rarely troubled by its bigger and noisier sister. Diana's visits to it were few and far between, for she remembered London too distinctly to be fascinated by a provincial town, and loved the lanes and the woods, the brooks and the rivers of Wedbury too well to care to leave them.

As she turned away, to return to the cottage, the moon disappeared behind a cloud, and at the same moment she heard the sound of wheels behind her. The lane was narrow and dark, so she drew back against the hedge to let the approaching vehicle pass.

It was a dog-cart with two gentlemen in it, and immediately after passing it pulled up, and she heard one of the men say:

"I can't find the matches. Sure you gave 'em to me, Grayson?"

"Dashed if I can remember," replied the other. "My head feels like a hot potato. Here, hold the reins, Mortimer, and I'll feel for the box. There you are! Confound it! You've dropped it! Do you think you can get out?"

"I can get out right enough," retorted Mortimer. "The question is, can I get in again? I'll tell you what it is, we've both had too much, old man!"

He alighted laughing, and began to hunt for the match-box; and Diana saw, by the light of the lamp, that he was a certain Captain Mortimer, one of the "gentry" of the locality. He was in evening dress, with a light overcoat; his face was flushed and his movements unsteady and uncertain.

He found his box at last, lit his cigar, and handed a match up to his companion; but he seemed to be really doubtful as to his ability to return to his seat, and leaned against the body of the cart with indolent indifference.

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(To be Continued.)

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1069.—A POPULAR STYLISH WRAP.



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Brown broad cloth was used for this model. It is cut with full cape sleeve sections, joined to the back and front in "raglan" style. The coat is provided with a lining. A rolling collar finishes the neck edge. The coat closes at the centre front. This model is one of the latest words in wraps. It is especially designed for comfort, its lines are graceful, and if made of heavy woolen fabric it will make a fine serviceable winter wrap. In silk, velvet, and evening materials, it is serviceable also for dressy wear. The pattern is cut in 3 sizes: Small, Medium and Large. It requires 4 1/2 yards of 44 inch material for a Medium size.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10c. in silver or stamps.

1078.—A PRETTY STYLE FOR THE GROWING GIRL.



Girl's Dress with Long or Short Sleeve, and Tunic Blouse.

Brown serge, combined with plaid woolen is here shown. The model would be equally effective in blue velvet, with cashmere for blouse and tunic. The style is smart and becoming. The skirt is a three piece model, and is joined to an underwaist, over which the blouse is worn. The tunic is attached to the waist under the belt, but it may be omitted. The pattern is cut in 4 sizes: 8, 10, 12 and 14 years. It requires 4 1/2 yards of 36 inch material for a 10 year size.

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(To be Continued.)

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