

towards me was now most polite and pleasant—a change that I felt boded no good. He intended to obtain my money by marrying me to his son Michael, whose evil reputation as a gambler was well-known in Petersburg. We travelled back to Finland in the autumn, and in the winter he took me to stay with his sister in Nice. Yet almost daily he referred to that tragedy at Naples, and threatened me with death if ever I uttered a single word, or even admitted that I had ever seen the man who was his rival and his victim.”

“Last June,” commenced another paragraph, “we were in Helsingfors, when one day the Baron called me suddenly and told me to prepare for a journey. We were to cross to Stockholm and thence to Hull, where the *Iris* was awaiting us, for Mr. Leithcourt and Mabel had invited us for a summer cruise to the Greek Islands. We boarded the yacht much against my will, yet I was powerless, and dare not allege the facts that I had already established concerning our fellow-guests. Muriel and I, it seems, were taken merely in order to blind the shore-guards and Customs officials as to the real nature of the vessel, which, when safely out of the Channel, was re-painted and re-named the *Lola*, until her exterior presented quite a different appearance to the *Iris*.

“The port of Leghorn was our first place of call, and for some reason we ran purposely upon a sand-bank and were towed off by Italian torpedo-boats. Next evening you came on board and dined, Muriel and myself having strict orders not to show our-