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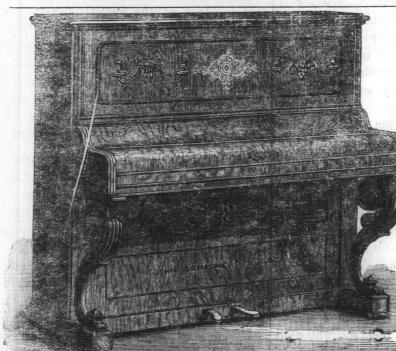
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CAMERON'S "SHADOW LOVE.

By the Author of Dora Thorne.

CHAPTER XXII.

(Continued.)

Would the day ever come when she would reign in that magnificent mansion as its mistress? She would have been its mistress now. her husband still by her side, if it had not been for this Miss Cameron who was loved 'almost as much as my lord.' Would she ever stand there, arrayed in fine dresses and costly jewels the queen of brilliant fetes, honored, happy, and beloved, her husband with her, and her heart at rest? If they lived to see Walton together, would he tell her the secret of the will? She might have written to him, and have told him of the line she had read in Miss Cameron's letter, and have asked him to tell her the secret of the will-but she would not do it. That knowledge which he had kept from her and had shared with another woman must be voluntarily shared with her.

'It is his secret and Miss Cameron's,' she said to herself, bitterly—' not mine.'

And then came a reaction. How could she be unjust to one who had given her such proofs of his love? All that concerned him concerned her too-the secret was hers as well as his.

'I never saw such a one to dream in my life!' said Mrs. Grame to herself; and then, with a courtesy full of respect, she said that the lady had now seen all that was generally shown to strangers.

'And I have enjoyed it very much,' said Lady Rylestone; but her heart sunk as she

She was going now; and, although she had the pleasure of seeing Allan's home, she knew that she was as far from the discovery she wished to make as she had been before.

She thanked Mrs. Grame in the manner best suited to that good lady's understanding. The result was a still deeper courtesy, and an offer to show the conservatories if the lady liked.

The lady liked anything that would give her the chance of remaining a little longer at Walton; so they went through the long range of glass houses, and Lady Rylestone was rewarded at last.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LADY RYLESTONE had given up all hope she had resigned herself to going away from Walton Court, knowing no more than when she had come, when suddenly a few words from the housekeeper produced a marvelous change in her ideas.

They had arrived at the end of the long range of conservatories and Mrs. Grame showed her visitor a shorter road through the park, one which would bring her much more quickly to the gate. Lady Rylestone looked round to impress the picture more firmly on

'Years will roll by,' she said, impulsively, and no change will come here.'

'I do not think so,' rejoined Mrs. Grame: we shall have a change here soon, I expect. . What will that be?' inquired Lady Ryle-

stone, with polite deference.

'I have heard that Madame de Valmy is going back to France; and, if so, Miss Cameron will make some change, I suppose. She will marry, or find a new companion, or something of the kind.'

News of Mme. de Valmy had not much interest for the wife of Lord Rylestone. She repeated her adieus to Mrs. Grame, and tak ing the short path indicated, made the best of her way to the gates.

She had seen Walton. When she heard of it or read of it in the future, she could always recall the tall towers, the square towers, the grand mass of gray stone, the light graceful balconies, with their twisted pillars and radiant flowers. She could recall the gorgeous rooms, the broad corridors, the picture-gallery, the library. It was all engraved on her heart and brain : she could never forget.

But she had no clew to the secret. She was returning just as unhappy as she had come her unhappiness increased by the fact that whatever the secret was, it lay huried between her husband and Miss Cameroon. It was shared between them. She remembered now that Lord Rylestone had always spoken of Miss Cameron as though she were almost a stranger to him-that he had seen her only once or twice. How could that be, if they had a secret between them? The sharing of a

secret betokened intimacy. Why should we have denied all intimacy? And yet she could not doubt him-she dared not. To doubt him would have been to lose all her faith, her hope, her love, her life—to doom herself to the most terrible despair; but she resolved more firmly than ever that she would find out what the secret was.

'Time will teach me how to do it,' she said

It was growing late in the evening when she reached Lutdale Station, and there was still some time to wait for the train. She was at first inclined to remain at the "Rylestone Arms" hotel, but the reason which deterred her was a prudential one.

'I could not stay there an evening with my veil down,' she said to herself; 'and it would not do for me to be seen, lest, when Allan brings me home, I should be recognized.'

She preferred waiting at the station to staying there; but she felt that she must have something with which to beguile the time and keep her from thinking, or she should go mad.

She went to the book stall, took up a novel, and looked through some of the pages. It seemed very interesting, and she purchased it. Perhaps, after all, the turning-point of her life was the reading of that story.

She soon became fascinated by it. The heroine seemed to her one of the most charming creations she had ever met with. She read the opening chapters of the book during the first stage of her return journey, and then the light in the railway carriage grew too dim; she could not see to continue reading until she reached Faverley, from which station she would go direct to Marpeth.

The night had grown dark then, and Lady Rylestone went into the waiting room, intending to read there until the train into which she had to change should arrive. She soon became absorbed in the fascinating pages. Suddenly with a low cry-a cry that died away on her trembling lips-she laid down the book. A great, almost terrible idea had occurred to her. The heroine of the novel, wanting to see a certain will, found admittance by stratagem into the house where it was kept. The idea that came to Margarita Rylestone was that she should do the same. Better anything than ignorance and suspense.

What a heroine in fiction did surely a woman in real life could imitate-could and would. She could go to Walton Court, and when there she could by some means or other see the will. It would be kept there-either the will or a copy. She remembered to have seen in the library a peculiar oaken chest; it was curiously carved, and she had no doubt but that it was the receptacle for all private papers. If she could reside in the house for a time, and get the key, all would be well.

But how was she to gain admittance? She would find out a way; the scheme would require thinking over, planning, but she would accomplish it in the end. Then she opened her book and tried to read again, but she could not-a burning fever had seized her mind; she could not rest, for it was consuming her. She closed the book, and went out on to the platform-that was better than the four walls of a room. She could pace up and down with rapid steps, without any one thinking it strange.

Over and over again, antil the words sickened her with their burning repetition, she said I must live at Walton, and find means to read the will;' and the thought was repeated in the throbbing of the steam-engine, the rush and whirl of the train. No matter what people said or porters shouted, she heard only the words, I must live at Walton, and find means to read the will.'

When the first feverish flush of the thought had died away, an idea came to her of how she could secure her end.

Mrs. Grame had announced that Mme. de Valmy was going back to France; and, from what Lord Rylestone had said, Margarita knew quite well that Mme. de Valmy was Miss Cameron's chaperon and companion. What was to prevent her from obtaining the situation of companion to Miss Cameron?

The magnitude of the idea at first appalled her, but by slow degrees she accustomed herself to it. People looked at her in wonder. She passed with rapid steps up and down the platform, her beautiful face so rapt, so intent, that she neither saw nor heard what was passing around her. She started back like one frightened when a porter came up to her and

'You wanted the train for Marpeth, ma'am; it is due now.' She looked at him with such dazed eyes that

the man grew half afraid. 'There is something wrong about her,' he thought, as he walked away.

(To be Continued.)

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