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It Won't Rub Off

The Alabastine Co., Limited 23 Willow Street. Paris, Ontario

Miwasa

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

at the beautiful buildings behind, dark against the shining snow. The shops were all dark, the music stilled and the wide semi-circle empty except for Mirth dancing in the moonlight and a solitary constable on his rounds. Mary was pondering on what she had seen of Miwasa, and how much more it meant to her than to the ordinary sight-seer.

Scraps of Steele Caybourn's speech to the Sociological Society the year before, recurred to her mind; it was the only time he had ever been induced to speak of his projects. The speech was quizzical or not, according to his hearers. Stupid people took Lawrie in sober earnest, thought Mary; those with a little sense thought he was merely a joker; while the truly wise, through the veil of irony, clearly perceived the great heart. This particular utterance of his had caused a mighty discussion and various interpretations were put upon it. As she considered Lawrie's words and what he had accomplished, Mary realised that her mind and the mind of her old friend had been travelling towards the same goal all these years. Miwasa embodied many of her own truest ideas; but humanised—Mary frankly conceded it—by a broader experience. "An orphan!" thought Mary, bitterly—"young, of course, half-formed, uncomprehending! Would such a one be able to help him? Not likely!"

"I didn't expect my sociological experiments to benefit anyone," Lawrie had started his speech by saying, "but I was agreeably disappointed. They were of the greatest benefit—to myself!"

In referring to the workmen's council, which had assisted in formulating the plans for the new town, he said: "Unreasonably enough, the man who works insists on having theories as well as the student. He forms ideas of life merely from living it, and of men from mixing with them. I was curious to see what the working class would propose for the relief of the rich!"

It was in Lawrie's ideas of educating children that Mary perceived herself most clearly. "Schools are admirable," he had said; "but does it not seem as if education was still administered in stated doses like medicine? Children's brains are crammed while their five senses starve. A child's life is his education. In Miwasa our most ingenious authors devote their imagination to the creation of great open air games, simple dramas which are continued from afternoon to afternoon, and in which I have observed many a staid elder, surreptitiously taking part. There is a children's theatre too; fairy plays and sound melodramas in good English are provided."

"This is the extraordinary fact Miwasa has already proved," he said in concluding; "that the mass of the people when given a fair choice prefer the genuine to the flash. They actually take pleasure in well-designed houses and beautiful furnishings when brought within the reach of all. They know good songs, too, and well-written plays, and are developing a wholesome tendency to hiss the trash. Strangest of all, perhaps, they choose the newspaper which is reputable—so it is also sane and lively. All this encourages the hope, quixotic though it may appear, that some day instead of the richest man in town, the cleverest worker may become Miwasa's hero."

In the full daylight next morning Mary found the witchery of the grave, carven woman who represented Miwasa, more potent and quite as inexplicable. Looking at her critically she thought, while the workman-

ship was magical, the result was not wholly satisfactory; in the flesh she could hardly have called the woman beautiful. But she could not leave the spot; the statue seemed to evoke pictures of her early youth, the very smells and sounds of places she had not thought of in years. She observed after a while that the face was not really grave, but almost smiling. Her sympathy with the graceful, draped matron was almost a painful feeling in its intensity—yet she could not in the least analyse it. Finally she noticed people were beginning to stare at her curiously; she pulled down her veil and hurried away.

Three days later the personally-conducted excursion was comfortably esconced in its cars in the Miwasa station. There was a considerable delay in starting, but the excursionists hardly noticed it. They had enough to talk about all the way home and to spare; the fancy dress skating party, the wonderful pictures and statuary, the artistic plays they had seen, the storming of the ice-palace with fire-works, and decorations, the processions, the music, the sports and games—never did a personally-conducted excursion feel that it had received so much for its money.

Mary was the only unhappy member of the party. For the past three days she had scarcely ventured out of the hotel from a morbid fear of meeting the man everybody was talking about; when she did go, she was heavily veiled. The chatter in the car was hard to bear; as there seemed no chance of the train leaving at once, she pulled down her veil, and leaving the car, commenced to walk up and down the platform. She was feeling dead tired. Her pride had won; but to voluntarily put three thousand miles between herself and him had cost her a terrible struggle.

Across the platform stood a train of two cars and a huge throbbing engine, at which the excursionists from their windows were casting inquisitive glances. Mary regarded it absently; there being nothing else to look at. It was evidently the special train of one of the magnates who had come up to Miwasa for the carnival. Everything about the shining cars bespoke luxury, from the glint of snowy linen and silver up ahead, to the observation platform with its plate glass and shining brass rails.

A voice near Mary asked a trainman why the excursion train was delayed.

"The special has the right of way," he answered. "They are waiting for Mr. Caybourn."

At the same moment a well-remembered, tall figure appeared on the overhead platform, and came rapidly down the steps immediately in front of Mary. With what composure she could muster, she turned her back, and walked slowly towards the steps of her own car. She thanked her stars for the heavy veil.

Among all the other sounds of the station, she distinguished his quick, sure steps on the platform behind her. She passed the end platform of his train and thought she was safe. She heard him say, evidently to his conductor:

"Sorry to have kept you wait—"

Then the eager steps recommenced behind her, and her heart beat like a trip-hammer. He passed her, and getting between her and the steps of her car, turned and frankly stared. Mary put out her hand against the car for support.

"Mary!" he said softly. "I knew I couldn't be mistaken!"

Mary could not answer. About two hundred people were interested in the scene.

"To think of finding you here!" he exclaimed. "Come, we must get away from this where we can talk."

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