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THE Lady of the Night

—OR—

Amelia Makes a Success

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAIR AMELIA.

I happened to see her one night on the stage—happy night for me!—and a friend took me behind and introduced me. I fell in love with her at once, Nora. We went about together, and—well, you know the rest. Of course, I know what you are thinking, dear—that a lady who has appeared on the stage is not quite—er—up to our class; but Amelia is very different to other people of that kind. She is a lady, as you see; the daughter of a clergyman—a dean, I believe. And really, when you come to think of it, the condescension—if there is any, which, of course, there isn't—was on Amelia's part. Only a week before I proposed to her she had refused the son of a marquis."

Nora, unsophisticated as she was, in some ways almost as simple as the man himself, knew instinctively that it was all wrong, and that he had been entrapped by an adventuress. She listened in a kind of stupor as her father feebly dilated on his great good fortune in securing so beautiful, so accomplished, and so much-sought-after a woman; and she was almost relieved when the door opened and the lady herself entered.

Mrs. Ryall had, with a speed no doubt acquired in the pursuit of her vocation, changed into a cheap and bizarre evening dress, of the Edgware Road type, with a plentiful supply of obviously false jewellery. She had remarked the eyebrows, and done up her face; and Nora could only look from one to the other, from the woman, bridling with vanity and self-satisfaction, to her father, simpering proudly and dotingly, with the feeling which possesses one in the middle of a grotesque dream.

"Oh, 'ere you are," said Mrs. Ryall, with an affectation of playfulness, but with a certain sharpness in her eyes. "Is dinner ready?" She went to the fire, and looked round over her shoulder at the shabby room; and as she did so, her thin lips came together with an expression of subdued anger and disappointment. "What an old 'ouse this is, and what a dreary place!—I mean all round it. Is this what you call an estate? That's funny! Now, I call it a farm, and not a very big one at that—but then I have been used to such big places! And how shabby you have let your furniture get! We really must buy some new things." She looked up at Nora with a spiteful gleam in her eyes. "I wonder how you could go on living in such a place as this!"

Nora had risen, and was going towards the door, but she stopped, and looking straight at her new stepmother, said very quietly, very slowly—

"It is my home."

CHAPTER V.

MRS. RYALL IS DISAPPOINTED.

Nora lay awake that night with a misery too deep for tears. That her father should have married again was bad enough, but that he should have married such a woman, and that he should have done it so secretly and sprung it upon her in such a manner, was almost unendurable. It was well-nigh incredible that her father, weak and foolish though he was, should have been so blind as not to have read the character of the woman at their first meeting, should not have seen what Nora, unsophisticated and ignorant of the world, had been able to discern the moment her eyes had fallen upon the new Mrs. Ryall.

But the thing was done, and Nora had to make the best of it; how difficult it would be to make anything but the worst of it she did not yet realise.

Notwithstanding her sleepless night, she was up as early as usual and about her work. She imagined that Mrs. Ryall would be down in time to give her husband his breakfast, but when Nora returned from the farm she found her father sitting at the table alone and looking rather disturbed, as if he, too, had had rather a bad night.

"Your mother——" he began, but Nora broke in quietly—

"Don't call her that, father; say Mrs. Ryall, or—Amelia." Her lips twisted at the word as if it were a difficult one to utter.

"Well, Amelia, then, if you are so particular," he said, colouring, his eyes evading hers, "has a bad headache, and Martha has taken up her breakfast. I am afraid," he went on nervously, "that Amelia was not altogether pleased—I mean that she was rather disappointed with the place. Your see, it is so different to what she has been accustomed to, and I suppose the country would look rather—er—shabby. You see, she's been used to such luxury. Of course we cannot alter everything at once, but I suppose we could get some new furniture, carpets, and so on, for some of the rooms?" He glanced round him with a novel air of criticism and discontent. "We are used to it, but I daresay it comes to her as a kind of shock. Of course, she has not complained," he added hastily, with a furtive glance at Nora's grave face, "but she—er—er—just made a few remarks. What do you say, Nora?"

Nora looked at him almost pityingly.

"I daresay it is shabby, father," she said, "and that we ought to have some new things, but I don't know where the money is to come from."

"Oh, that's all right," he said, with a foolish laugh. "We can get some furniture on this new hire system. I don't understand how it is done, but I daresay Amelia will know all about it." It is extremely probable that Amelia would know. "I will ask her to see about it; it will amuse her and cheer her up. Of course, it is most important that Amelia should be kept in good spirits"—he meant in good temper. "How is the farm getting on? By the way, that's rather a seedy get-up of yours, Nora; Amelia mentioned it last night."

Nora's face flushed, her lips tightened, and there came into her eyes a little flash which was not often seen there, but which her father and Martha always recognised as a danger signal; for with all her good nature Nora was quick tempered.

"Mrs. Ryall—Amelia—will soon get accustomed to my old clothes, I daresay, father," she said; "at any rate, we cannot afford to buy any new ones. What does it matter? Why, father, don't you see that you'll want all the money we can spare, and more, for her clothes?"

It was so incontestable that Mr. Ryall could not dispute it. They ate the remainder of their breakfast in silence, Mr. Ryall occasionally pausing to glance at the ceiling and to listen with more apprehension than loving impatience. Nora got up from the table and went out, but not before Martha had waylaid her and drawn her into the kitchen. Martha had been with the Ryalls since she was a girl; but she wanted to leave that day month, or as soon as Nora could get some one to take her place.

"I don't think as I can stand it Miss Nora," she gasped; "it's not so much having a new missis, but one of that sort! She wants to be waited on hand and foot, and it 'ud take all my time; besides, I'm a-feelin' certain as we shouldn't get on. She—she called me 'wo—woman' this morning!"

Martha broke down as she indignantly related this slight, and Nora turned away with quivering lips and tears perilously near her eyes. At the sight of her young mistress's grief Martha, of course, relented, and, taking the now sobbing girl in her arms, she vowed that she would not leave her to the lady, whom, in the stress of her emotion, she designated "a painted cat."

Nora tried to rebuke her, but truth is truth, and the rebuke fell short of effectiveness.

It was a relief to get out of the house, which Mrs. Ryall had already managed to impregnate with anything but a vague scent of patchouli; and Nora sought the shippen, which, by contrast, was sweet with the breath of the cows. She was ashamed of her tears, as she was always ashamed of any indication of the weakness of her sex, and she tried to lose the sense of her trouble in her dairy work. Strangely enough, the advent of her stepmother did not fully occupy Nora's mind. Eliot Graham crossed it more than once; he, like herself, was unfortunately placed, but then he was a man, was free to go where he liked, to take his life in his hands; whereas she was only a girl, must stay where Providence had placed her, must depend on others.

When she went in to lunch she found that Mrs. Ryall had come down. The lady did not improve by daylight; her peculiar appearance needed the glare of the footlights; in the clear light of mid-day the hair and the complexion were more obviously false; and Nora looked at her aghast, amazed that her father could have been so palpably deceived.

"Oh, 'ere you are at last," said Mrs. Ryall snappishly and with a yawn. "I wondered what had become of you. What 'ave you been doing with yourself?"

"I have been at work," replied Nora.

"At work! What work?"

"On the farm," said Nora wearily. "I have been in the dairy making the butter; and this morning before breakfast I rode round to see that none of the young cattle had strayed."

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Mrs. Ryall stared at her with a mixture of astonishment and disgust.

"D'you mean to say that you do that kind of thing?" she demanded. "Why, that's what you call labourer's work, ain't it? Don't you keep hands, people to do the farm work?"

"We have only one man, with occasional help," Nora explained, "and there is a great deal to do. I have always looked after the farm."

Mrs. Ryall tossed her head.

"Well, it seems to me I've been pretty well taken in," she said, with scorn and irritation. "From what your father said, I thought he was a country swell, one of the landed gentry, as they call it."

"He is," said Nora; "the Ryalls have been here for hundreds of years. One of the stones in the old part of the house—it is not used now—is marked 1416. I do not think my father intended to deceive you. But we are very poor."

Mrs. Ryall gave a little snort of contempt.

"What's the use of being landed gentry if you're poor?" she said. "I did not ask your father how much money he had got—it wasn't the kind of thing a young girl would ask, was it?—but I expected to come to a decent place, to the regular kind of thing—nice 'ouse, plenty of servants, carriages and horses, and all that."

"I am sorry you should be disappointed," said Nora. "We don't keep a carriage, only a rough country cart, and besides the farm horses there is only the pony which I ride."

"A pony," said Mrs. Ryall; "well, that's something, Reginald!" Mr. Ryall had entered sheepishly and had glanced at her face as a man might consult a barometer. "I have been telling Nora—that's an Irish name; you ain't Irish, are you? I do dislike the Irish——"

"It's a Scottish name, too," said Nora very quietly. "I am Scottish."

"Well, that's not much better," remarked Mrs. Ryall contemptuously; "but I was saying, Reginald, that you must get me a pony-carriage for that pony of ours. Of course, I shall want to drive out and pay visits, and that must do if there's nothing better."

He glanced nervously at Nora; her face had flushed and then grown very pale.

"Yes, yes, of course," he said; "we'll get a little chaise. I am sure Nora will be very pleased to let you have her pony."

"Her pony!" echoed Mrs. Ryall, raising her eyebrows. "I thought it belonged to the 'ouse, and I suppose it does. 'Owever, it doesn't signify as long as I 'ave something to drive about in. You can't expect me, a lady born and bred—my poor father was a clergyman, my dear," she informed Nora in parenthesis—"to tramp about the muddy country lanes."

(To be continued.)

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CAMOUFLAGED AS TEMPERANCE BEER, SEIZED AT SYDNEY.

SYDNEY, N.S., May 2.—The biggest liquor raid ever carried out in Cape Breton took place to-day when Inspector George R. Rideout seized a box car of assorted liquors, estimated to be worth at local prices at least $15,000. The shipment consisted of 117 barrels camouflaged as a temperance beverage, but as it was being unloaded 17 barrels of hard liquor were discovered and it is believed a large number of beer barrels consist of top layers of beer bottles over long necks of rum, gin and whiskey. Inspector Rideout says that the hard liquor seized is of an excellence rarely encountered in these decadent days of prohibition.

It would easily retail here for $9 or $10 a bottle. A feature of the seizure is that all the proceedings have been taken under the Doherty Act, and it is believed to be the first time this law has been invoked here, previous seizures having been under the N. S. Temperance Act.

As a result proceedings will probably be instituted against five defendants, namely, the manufacturers, the National Breweries of Montreal, the shippers, the Petrie Manufacturing Co., of Sydney, the consignee, Michael Nolan, of Glace Bay, and the Canadian National Railways for accepting the shipment. Because it is the first brought here under the Doherty Act the case is expectted to provide a legal battle royal, and it is reported the National Breweries will send two lawyers from Montreal to handle their end of the affair.

Eats Better, Sleeps Better, Feels Better

WHY W. M. ANDERSON PRAISES DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS.

Doctors Gave Him a Few Months to Live—Now He Is Better Than He Ever Expected to be Again.

Monte Creek Hotel, Monte Creek, B.C., May 13th.—(Special).—There is no more enthusiastic believer in Dodd's Kidney Pills anywhere than Mr. W. M. Anderson, a well-known resident here. Mr. Anderson goes so far as to state he believes he owes his life to Dodd's Kidney Pills.

"I was in a very weak condition, not only from kidney trouble, but also from bronchitis, from which I have suffered for years," Mr. Anderson states. "Two years ago the doctor gave me only a few months to live.

"I commenced taking Dodd's Kidney Pills and also Diamond Dinner Pills, which are a valuable adjunct. I soon found relief and I persevered. To-day I am eating better and sleeping better and feeling better and I ever expected to again.

"I find it is not necessary now to take Dodd's Kidney Pills constantly. But I would not be without them for anything."

Ask your neighbors if Dodd's Kidney Pills are not the remedy sick kidneys are crying for.

IN THE GLOAMING.

The gray of evening descends, my little trip will soon be through; the thought to me no terror lends, as my calm journey I pursue, for I have done my best, my friends, and more than that no man can do. My best was but a trifling thing, I must admit, now that I'm old; I never could rear up and swing the harp that Milton used to hold; it wasn't in my soul to spring such music as from Byron rolled. But I have toiled away with zest, my strains the highest that I knew, and now the sun is in the west, and skies grow dark that late were blue, I know that I have done my best, and more than that no man can do. Old age is tranquil and serene if one can take a glance behind, survey the rocky roads he's seen, the struggle and the weary grind, and know his wreath, however mean, was still the best one he could find. The gods do not their gifts bestow in equal measure to the flock; one man is born to cop the dough, the next must wait for ghosts to walk; one man is built to be a beau, his neighbor is a homely crock. But when it's time to go to rest, the evening come, the errands run, the gifts and talents we possessed are measured by the fruits they've won; unless we've tried to do our best we've failed, however much we've done.

Fads and Fashions.

Organdie ruffles trim the dainty frocks of voile, dotted swiss and gingham.

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To Restore An Ancient Monastery.

How the famous mother-house of the Carthusian monks, an old centre of culture and learning, in France, near St. Pierre de Chartreuse, is to be revived, is told by a French correspondent in a London paper.

From St. Pierre de Chartreuse the way leads for a mile or so through an absolute desert—a waste of dark, close-set woods, of dizzy crests and jumbled masses of rocks, where the silence is broken only by the murmurs of mountain torrents and the cow bells of an invisible herd.

Suddenly, a thrn in the path, there comes into view, set in a double circle of mauve heights and bright green meadows, that vast monastic city which was the mother-house of the famous Order of Carthusians.

The Carthusian monks were expelled from France by the law of 1901, but a visit to their monastery, formerly forbidden to outsiders, enables one to reconstruct the inner life of the community and reveals with striking clearness the double character, spiritual and temporal, mystical and practical, by which that community was moved.

After crossing the fine, spacious court of honor, with its two large fountain basins, you pass through a massive doorway into that part of the monastery which was set apart for strangers and visitors of importance. It consists of two enormous wings, with protruding turrets, which contain imposing, austere halls, bearing such names as Salle de France, of Italy, of Germany, of Burgundy, so called because they served as meeting places for the Carthusian priors from those countries. For the order was above all an international one; every country of Europe was represented. One of its most revered members was St. Hugh of Avalon, Bishop of Lincoln. In the last few years before the dissolution, however, the majority of the fathers were Germans and Austrians.

Jealous of Its Privileges.

The order was fiercely jealous of its privileges and its independence. From the time of its foundation, in the eleventh century, it had many a difference with the Popes, and it was by means anxious to belong to France. Until the very eve of the revolution it played the part of the sovereign principality, with feudal jurisdiction over high and low, maintaining its seat of authority in what might be described as a neutral canton between France and Savoy and possessing its establishments all over Europe.

These monks were, in fact, as a close student of their history puts it, in some ways the successors of the Knights of St. John, and right up to our times they preserved the traditions and certain of the prerogatives of the great ecclesiastical feudalism.

And this great tradition is not to be lost. Not long after the departure of the monks the University of Grenoble had, with the assent of the state which now supports the monastery as a historical monument, conceived the idea of reconstructing the Grand Chartreuse, of re-establishing it as an international centre of learning.

This scheme, which was on the point of taking shape when the war broke out, is expected to be carried out next year, and it is hoped to interest foreign universities in it.

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