

### 

A footman threw open the door. "Lord Brakespeare," he announced. The marquis entered in his fur coat, a small leather box in his hand. "Only just looked in to tell you I have arrived," he said, smiling round upon them. "Give me ten minutes to dress, and don't wait unless you like, ucchess."

Whate is Constance, duchess?"
 "There room safe and sound," returned the duchess, laughingly.
 "All right; I sha'n't be more than ten minutes," and he went out.
 Ten, fifteen minutes passed, during which the duke had consulted his turnipolike timepiece three times, and then the marquis entered, followed by a dapperlooking old gentleman in irreproachable evening dress.
 "Mr. Waller," he said, introducing him to the duches.

to the duchess. "Come and see the set tlements signed," he added, in an under Mr. Waller was made welcome, and

Mr. Waller was made welcome, and the duke lugged out his watch again. "It isn't like Constance to be late," said Lady Kitty, already enamored of Constance and ready to stand up for her. "Yes; where on earth is Ruth?" ex-elaimed the duke. "Hate having dinner kept; spoils everything." "What have you got there?" asked the duchess of the marquis. He held up the box he still carried. "Guess," he said, with a laugh. "It is the family diamonds." "Oh." exclaimed Lady Kitty, sidling

the family diamonds." "Oh," exclaimed Lady Kitty, sidling up to him, "do show them to us, Lord Brakespeare!" "Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Lady Kate. "And these are the famous Brake-speare diamonds? How proud Constance will be! Let me look at them. Oh, they are too beautiful!"

are too beautiful!" "Five and twenty minutes past." grumbled the duke, staring at his watch. "Til go up and see what is the mat-ter," snid Lady Kitty, putting down the diamonds, with a reluctant, lingering

glapee. "Yes, do; and knock at Ruth's door," said the duchess.

Lady Kitty ran off, and the rest gath-ered round the table and examined the diamonds.

Presently the door opened and Lady litty entered. Kitty

Kitty entered. "I-I don't know what is the matter," she said, trying to speak calmly, "but neither Constance nor Ruth is in her room, and no one knows where they

room, and no one knows where they are!" OHAPTER XXIX. A silence fell upon them all as Lady Kitty made her announcement and the marquis was the first to speak. "You look quite alarmed, Kitty," he said, with a smile, "Do you think they have both disappeared" The duchess looked up. "I daresay they are about the house. If it were line I should say they were on the terrace; Constance is always in the open air." "I will go and see," said the marquis, and he left the room. "Go and ring for Constance's maid, Kitty, she will tell us where Con-tance has gone."

"Go and Ting Kitty; she will tell us where stance has gone." Lady Kitty left the room quickly, and returned as the marquis re-entered by the opposite door. "It is very strange," she began, falter-ingly, "but I can not find the maid. No one seems to have seen her for some hours. She has been at work in Con-trace's room."

The duchess turned to the marquis, who stood half smiling, half serious. "Can you not find her, Wolfe?" she asked.

"No," he replied, and he laughed. can not think where she has gone. It is some jest, some bit of fun which Kit-ty has persuaded her into, I suppose." "Of course," assented the duchess ris-

"Of course," assented the duchess ris-ing. "Depend upon it, they will both come sailing in by the time we have taken our seats." They went into the dining-room and took their seats, leaving two chairs va-cant, one beside the duke and between bim and the marquis for Constance, and the soup was handed round. "I wonder where they can be hiding?" said Lady Kitty, who thought it odd that of any practical joke was being performed she had not been asked to play a part in it, and was inclined to be rathed jealous of Lady Ruth. "You don't think they are dressing up, duch-ess?"

ess?" Her grace laughed. "What do you mean, child? That they will appear in some masquerade, some fancy dress? No, it is scarcely likely. Ruth might-well, I can scarce-to inscient Puth doing it and I can't

"Lady Ruth ordered a brougham some time ago, and left the Towers in it, your grace," he repeated. The marquis rose, his face rather pale. The duke laid bis hand upon his arm. "Don't agitate yourself, Wolfe," he said, with a chuckle. "It's part of the plot. Sit down, man; finish your din-ner, or they'll have the laugh on you." But the marquis could not sit down again, much less resume his dinner. "Did Miss Graham go with Lady Ruth" he asked, quietly. "No, my lord. Lady Ruth went alone, and in a hurry." The duchess stared from one to the other.

"No, my lord. Lady Kuth went sione, and in a hurry." The duchess stared from one to the other. "It is the most extraordinary thing 1 ever heard of," she said, slowly. "Can Ruth have received a message from her father? He may be worse. Did Lady Ruth leave any message, Johnstone?" "No, my lady," replied the butler, standing unregardful of the dinner, like the rest; "none whatever." "I will go to her room. Don't look so anxious, Wolfe. There is nothing to be alarmed about." "I am not afraid," he said, forcing a smile. "Why should I be?" He acompanied the duchess to the door, and after opening it for her, fol-lowed her into the hall. "I can not understand it," she ex-elaimed "Why on earth should Ruth..." She stopped. "Why. Wolfe, I'll tell you what has happened!" "Yest? he seid, eagerly. "She has gone to the castle for some-thing that Constance has forgotten." He accepted the suggestion for a mo-ment, and his face cleared, but it fell again directly. "Why not send a servant? Besides, that doese not account for Constance's ab-setoe and the maid's." "Come upstairs with me." He followed her a far as the corridor, and waited there till she returned to him, her face still nore puzzled. "Ruth is not in her room, and there is no letter or message of any kind," she said. "And Constance?" "I did to the ane mont" she acid.

"And Constance?" "I did not go into her room," she said, "I did not go into aer room, she saw, in a lower voice; "I did not like to-..." "Good heaven! You speak as if there were something serious, something tra-gic, in the business. Go and see the ducheas..."

As he spoke, they heard the hall door

open, and Lady Ruth's voice. The duchess started, and was hurry-ing down, but he touched her arm. "Don't-don't let her think we attach-

The duchess started, and was during the standard started, her hards claim was during the started, her hards claim was duch and starts and they went down the starts side by side.
Lady Ruth looked up and saw them, and started, her hards claimched nervous the starts side by side.
Lady Ruth looked up and saw them, and started, her hards claimched nervous the starts of the starts of the starts side of the starts side by side.
The was that she was dealy pale. "Ruth' exclaimed the duchess, and not in the sweetest accents, "where have you been?"
The marquis said nothing, but stood, his eyes fixed upon her face. "She looked at the duchess and at him, and her lips moved. Her agitation was not all acting, for. like all who had come tin contact with him, she had a whole some fear of the marquis, and a difficult, a dangerous part lay before her. "I—oh, Wolfe!" she broke off.
He did not respond to the exclamation but his lips drew together more tightly. "Where is Constance." demanded the duchess. "You have frightened us terribly, and if there is any joke in this busit iness, it is a very stupid one." "Constance—" murmured Lady Ruth. The uchess publed open the library door, near which they happened to be standing, but Lady Ruth weth pash her into the room, and signed to the marquis. "I—I must see him alone, duchess;" Inc.

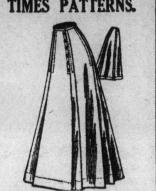
quis. "I-I must see him alone, duchess,"

1--1 must see him alone, ducness, she said, tremulously. The duchess changed color, and a look of apprehension came into her eyes. "Very well," she said in a low voice. "Send for me if you want me; I shall be in the drawing room. Go with her, Wolfe." He followed Ledy. Buth into the room.

Wolfe." He followed Lady Ruth into the room, and, closing the door, stood before her, and she sunk into a chair and covered her face with her hands. "Be quick!" he said, his anxiety mak-ing him seem stern and hard. "What is the matter? Where is Constance?" She sobbed, then raised her face from her hands. "Oh. Wolfe, I do not know how to tell you," she breathed. "Where is Constance?" he demanded again, and his eyes flashed.

"It is a poor joke," he said; "wretch-edy poor. And it is yours alone, FII be sworn; Constance had no hand in it." "Wolfe, it is no joke," she said, al-most inaudibly. "It is true! She has gone! And with him?" "Take care, Ruth?" he said; and his eyes began to grow red and angry with the savage Brakespeare expression—the look she remembered in him as a boy." T have borne with this nonsense of yours very well, but my patience is nearly exhausted. It is a miserable, practical joke, and you play it very well, very well. But let there be an end of it. Go and fetch Constance." She rose and looked at him, half an-moyed at the persistence of his incredul-ity, at his faith in the woman he loved. "You will not believe I am serious," she said in a hushed voice. "Oh, Wolfe, would not believe it myself until I had found she had gone, and them—then I thought only of you—and went after her. I thought that—that I might per-suade her to come back." "What is all this you are chattering?" he demanded, rought. **TIMES PATTERNS.** 

TIMES PATTERNS.



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# ? The Girl in the **Opposite Box**

\*\*\*\*\*\*\* (By Vance C; Criss.) Arch Morgan, civil engineer, read the telegram he held in his hand through the second time. He could not have de-sired a better offer in some respects, but when he realized that it meant an absence of a year he hesitated. That might ruin his chance of winning Lu-cile Westoh. He was not certain that she cared that much for him, but he felt that in a short time he would make the test.

Accustomed to thinking rapidly, he decided to find Miss Weston, tell her of his love and ask here if she would wait a year until he could return from a foreign land and claim her as his bride.

The sear units are come recars in some a foreign land and claim her as his bride. Even now there was less than two hours until the hour of departure. The caught a car and was soon at the fashionable Weston home. He had not taken time to notify the young woman of his visit, and he quickly found that she was not at home. From Mrs. Wes-ton he learned Lucile had gone to the theatre with Morton Walford, the one rival he had reason to fear. Determined to seize even the limited opportunity afforded he started for the Longman Theatre. When he arrived there he found he had but 20 minutes to



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HAMILTON EVENING TIMES MONDAY. MAY 31 1909.

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y imagin ne Ruth doing it, and I can't The second secon

ner bargain, and cut off, en, Wolfe " said the duke, with a chuckle. The marquis laughed. "It looks rather like it, sir," he said, dth a smile. "But I wish she would come in," he added, in an undertone to the duchers.

"Yes," she assented. "I can not under stand it. Constance is the most punc-tual of persons, and Ruth is not often late. Wherever they are, they have

late. Wherever they are, they have gone together." "And taken the maid with them," said Kitty; "and that is what seems so strange to me." "Oh, nonsense!" exclaimed the duch-ers; "why should they take the maid? She is about the house somewhere, flirt-ing with some of our people. She is a pretty girl. Johnstone!" The old butler came to her side noise-leasly.

The old butler came to her side noise-leasly. "Send and see if Miss Grahame's maid has come in, please." The butler whispered instructions to a footman, who left the room, and the dinner proceeded, but more silently. The absence of the two ladles had been a matter for amused conjecture during the progress of the soup, but as the courses came and went, the amuse-ment died away, and conjecture took a more serious form.

more serious form.

more serious form. Still the marquis went on talking; but his face had grown grave, and a look of disappointment crept into his eyes. Every minute was robbing him of the joy of her presence, which he had hastened down from London to experi-

ence. The footman returned and whispered to the butter, who approached the duch-ess' chair, and the marquis stopped talk-ting and listened. "Miss Graham'se maid is not in the homse, your grace." said the butter; "and Lady Ruth has left in a brough-am."

"What!" demanded the duchess, turn g upon him with amazeemnt.

again, and his eyes flashed. "I-I do not know," she replied. "You do not know?" His breath came quickly, and he looked at her as if she was the cause of all this trouble. "Don't, Wolfe," she solbed. "You frighten me! I do not know where she is!"

"You know she has gone?" "Yes."

"Yes." "Yes." "When did you know it? Where have you been? Come, there has been enough of this mummery! Where have you been? You can answer that. 'Do so quickly." "To-to the station." she faltered. "To follow Constance," she replied in a low, awed voice. "To follow Constance?" he repeated, as if he scarcely comprehended her. "Why should she have gone to the sta-tion?"

tion?" "Because-- Oh, Wolfe, this is hard for me! If there was anyone else who could tell you!" "In God's name, speak plainly and at once!" he exclaimed. "If you know anything, say so; you are driving me mad."

mad." "I-I-don't know all. I-I-Con-stance sent me a note; just an hour be-fore dinner. That man Rawson Fen-ton------"

IN A MOMENT SHE TURNED TO-WARD HIM WITH A GLANCE OF

DISPLEASURE.

locate the young woman, make known his love, and begin his voyage. From the entrance he could see her, sitting in one of the lower front boxes, apparently engrossed in the play. To reach her without attracting the attention of everyone in the house was out of the question, and he had no desire to make the affair conspicuous.



"To be solved a construction of the series of the solution the solution of the solution of the

"Yes. Good-bye, dear. Write often."

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which is right now; d'ye see-right now! "You fanned me along with a con-signment of forced draught atmos-phere about having it marked special and having it all sealed, signed and delivered by 4 o'clock Friday even-ing-which. I repeat, is now! "Bay, d'ye think I'm going to drill out o' this man's town in a suit of coal heaver's dungarees? D'ye imag-ine that I'm going to try to make a three sheet comedy hit on the main thoroughfare of the burg I'm going to attired in a Navajo blanket and a coccanut oiled topknot? D'ye think I'm going to stand for a pinch by walking around the illuminated sec-tions of that place in baby blue pa-jamas?

tions of that place in baby blue pa-jamas? "Say, you, gimme my laundry! I don't care whether it's doused in blu-ing or not! I want it, d'ye git that?" Just at this stage the proprietor of the laundry emerged from the back room, walked around the counter to where the customer with the Sahara simoon on was standing, grab-bed him by both labels of his coat, put him under the pinpoint focus of his bright hazel eyes and remarked unto him in a tone that was redolent of meaning and business: "Say, Mistef Big Lungs, stop that rashing of all the ...mel off your teeth and sprinkling the floor with pumice stone. It's too nice weather for that stuff. Cut out the vylophone

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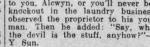
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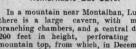
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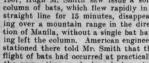
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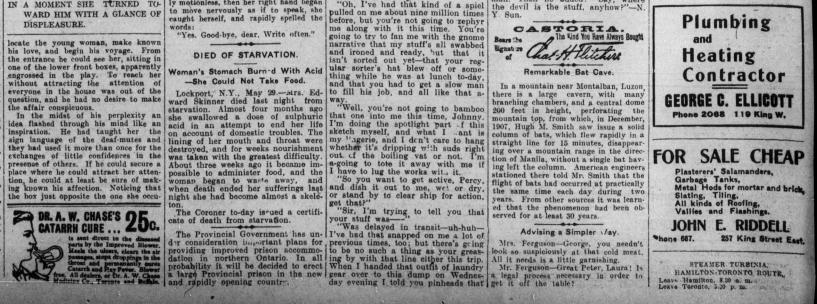








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