

Try it on something real dirty



Snowflake
THE FULL STRENGTH
Ammonia
softens water-cuts grease

"Flowers of the Valley,"

OR
MABEL HOWARD, OF THE LYRIC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
THE NEW SINGER.

The boy's face grew sad, and a strange look came into his eyes. "I wish you were," he said, softly. "But, Mabel, about the songs. What will you sing besides mine? How good of you to think of singing it! And he has bought it, too! Ah! he would not have done so, or thought it worth anything if he had not heard you sing it, Mabel. Your voice would make any 'trash' sound good."

"And your voice will make me vain, if you don't take care," said Iris. "Depend upon it, Paul, that your song will prove a success to-morrow, and the people will think more of that than my poor voice. But I must run away now and see about my dress."

"Ah!" he said. "I suppose you will want an evening dress? Shall you make—"

Iris shook her head.

"No, Paul, it is an afternoon 'at home,' and ladies wear morning dresses and bonnets."

"Ah, you know; you have been to them!" he said, gently, but shrewdly. Iris colored.

"I know that is right," she said. "You must look me out a song; I will sing anything you choose," and she turned off to her own room.

The dress was a more difficult matter, indeed, than the song, for Paul had plenty of the latter from which she could choose, while of the former she had only two—the one she had worn when she fled from Knighton, and another of plain black meringe she had bought. She had never made a bonnet, or, in fact, done anything in the way of millinery in her life, but she had often watched Felice at work, and she thought that she could, with the aid of some lace and some fresh ribbons, re-trim the bonnet and dress, and make them, at any rate, presentable. She changed the five-point note in buying the lace and ribbon, and a pair of lavender gloves, and spent the evening in Paul's work at work, and practicing the songs.

Long into the night she lay awake, thinking of the strange chance which had befallen her; at one time regarding it as a pretty good fortune, at another shuddering from the ordeal, and half resolved to send word to the manager in the morning she could not go. But at a few minutes before five o'clock she and Paul stood in the vast hall of Ormonde House, and delivered Mr. Stapleton's card to a footman in so gorgeous and overpowering a livery that Paul, accustomed to brilliant costumes as he was, could not take his eyes off him.

The footman glanced at the card, and then at Iris. She had drawn a veil over her face, and still kept it down, but the experienced eyes of the footman detected the lady in her figure and manner, and he said, respectfully:

"Quite right, miss; come this way, please."

They followed him up the great stairs into a small ante-room to the drawing-room or saloon, and, indicating a lounge, he asked them to be seated.

"I will tell her grace you have come," he said. "Shall I bring you some wine or coffee?"

Iris declined with thanks, but Paul was too overwhelmed by the magnificence of the place to utter a word. At last he crept a little nearer Iris, and whispered:

"What a splendid place, Mabel! I—I didn't think there were such rooms as this in a house. Why, it is as large as a theatre! And all this velvet and plush and gold fringe. Mabel, I feel half afraid."

Iris' own heart beating wildly, but from a very different cause, and she pressed his hand encouragingly.

"You will forget all the grandeur and fiery directly you begin to play, Paul," she said, in a low voice. "Try and think that you are in your place in the orchestra at the theatre, or, better still, sitting on the hearth rug at home and playing to me."

"Yes, that would be better!" he murmured.

The adjoining saloon had been empty until now, excepting for the footman, who were noisily giving orders, arranging the tables and chairs; but, as Iris spoke, one of the servants threw open a door, and a tall lady, of little more than middle age, swept in to the room, with a quick yet graceful step. She was plainly, but handsomely dressed, and, even if Iris had not remembered seeing her photograph, she would have known her to be the Duchess of Rosedale.

The lounge upon which they sat was placed near the opening between the two rooms, and Paul, in his timidity, had gradually got nearer and nearer the heavy plush curtains, so that he was almost hidden.

The duchess stood in the centre of the saloon and looked round; then came toward the ante-chamber. As she approached Iris raised her veil and stood up. The duchess looked surprised for a moment; then came forward and held out her hand.

"Oh, I did not know that any one had come yet!" she said, with a charming smile.

Iris saw that she was mistaken for one of the visitors, and bowed. As she did so, a footman hurried up and presented Mr. Stapleton's card to the duchess.

She looked at it, and from it to Iris, with a slight elevation of her eyebrows.

"Oh, Mr. Stapleton's people. Of course yes," she said. "Le me see—Miss Alfred, I think?"

Iris was about to correct her, but the duchess went on:

"It is very kind of you to come and sing for us, Miss Alfred. I hope the people won't talk too much. It is very stupid, but they always will chatter, won't they? And this is—"

She named and looked at Paul, with a kindly smile, as he slipped off the lounge and bowed.

"Paul Foster, your grace," said Iris. As she spoke the duchess looked at her quickly; the refined tones of the voice had evidently surprised her.

"Oh, yes, Paul Foster," she said, still

looking at Iris. "He plays the violin, does he not? Well, if we talk while you are playing, you must play loudly—and then I suppose we shall stop, for we all dearly love to hear our own voices," and she laughed.

Raising her hand, she brought a footman to her side.

"Bring some coffee, please," she said; then, with a gracious bow, she glided into the next room.

"Mabel, a duchess is not so very awful, after all!" whispered Paul. "Why, she spoke to us as simply as if she were—Mrs. Barker!"

Iris smiled. She could have told Paul that the higher the rank the simpler the manner, but the visitors were entering the saloon, and she drew back behind the curtains and watched in silence and with an anxiety that made her heart beat wildly. Would there be anybody among the throng who would recognize in "Mr. Stapleton's singer" the Iris Knighton who had been the belle of many a reception such as this? If she had dared, she would have kept her veil down, but she arranged it on her bonnet so that it shadowed her face as much as possible. Every now and then she heard names which were well known to the world, and Paul's blue eyes grew as large as saucers as people so famous that even he had heard of them were seen moving about the saloon and chatting and laughing just like ordinary mortals.

Presently two ladies—one middle-aged, the other a young girl—crossed the room and seated themselves on a lounge so close to the opening into the ante-chamber and the curtains which concealed Iris that she could hear every word of their conversation.

"The duchess has quite a crowd this afternoon," said one of them. "Everybody seems here! Isn't that Mrs. Vavasour? I thought she had run away with Captain Harding?"

"Not yet," responded the other, with a laugh. "Look! the duchess has only given her one finger. There is Lord Fordingbridge; doesn't look as if he could have done all those wonderful things in Egypt, does he? I wonder why all the great generals are such small men?"

"I like small men myself," said the young lady, bowing and smiling across the room to the great little military hero. "Here comes Lady Miltons; do fill up the seat, or she will join us. I do hate that woman! Ah, dear, Lady Blount!" she went on in the same breath, but with the most affectionate of tones. "Won't you come and sit down? No! Has Julia come with you? I don't see her! No! I am so sorry! I had looked forward to meeting her here so much! Then, before her ladyship had got scarcely out of hearing—" "What a relief! Really, I don't think I am more intolerant and disagreeable than other people, but I cannot stand that woman and her red-headed daughter! Have you heard the latest about the new beauty?"

Here the two heads went close together and Iris was, fortunately, deprived of the latest delicious scandal.

"We are to have some music, are we not, duchess?" said the first lady, as her grace passed them.

The duchess nodded and smiled.

"Yes, I have got some music for you—Miss Alfred, from the Lyric. But there is something better than that. He is coming—at least, he promised me!"

"Not—"

Iris lost the name, for several people were talking rather loudly near her, and coffee cups were clinking.

The duchess nodded an assent and passed on, and the young lady turned to her friend with an exclamation of interest, and even excitement.

"Do you really think it is true?" she said. "Do you really think he is coming? I should doubt it; it seems too good to be true."

"I don't know why he shouldn't; indeed, I don't know anything about him. Who is he?"

(To be continued)



Healthy Mother Merry Children Happy Home

TO maintain a happy home the housewife must keep in good health. Her duties are many and various, and it seems as if every other member of the family depended very much on her.

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"What did you do with my coat?" asks the daughter.

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Side Talks by Ruth Cameron

SOCIAL SERVICE ANYONE COULD DO.

The handwriting of a certain well-known woman whom I am happy to call my friend, a very recent past, passes under my eye without giving me a pleasantness in my subconscious mind.

And the reason is this: At the end of my first week as a newspaper woman, on a day, as it happened, of great discouragement because I had failed to get something I had been sent for and had received a call-down from my city editor, a letter came to my editor from that woman praising my work in reporting a city picnic for some thousands of children, of which she had been in charge.

It was a perfectly delightful letter. It said gracious things about both the story and the writer. I think I read it over at least 100 times that day.

She Has Written Hundreds.

And, as I now know, that letter was typical of hundreds of letters that woman has found time to write in the course of a very full and busy life.

What a lovely gift to humanity a custom like that represents!

How often we are touched by a story, helped by a poem, thrilled by reading of a deed of heroism, pleased by a good bit of work by some co-worker on a committee and feel the impulse to tell him or her about it.

And how seldom we convert that impulse into writing!

We haven't the time, we think. If that is the woman of whom I speak.

They Only Take Her a Moment to Write.

Her notes are always short. The one I speak of had only three pages in her very large writing. Often the notes are shorter than that. But they are not written at the moment when she feels the emotion and they have the grace and facility of expression that we all achieve if we strive when the iron is hot.

It is told of Richard Harding Davis that when he read a story by a new writer which pleased him he always wrote him a letter, and when especially pleased, he telegraphed. I

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23 THE PROPHET

There is a whole philosophy of happiness given in that sentence for it does not need to apply to love alone. Admire me and appreciate me and tell me so sometimes, is one of the possible extensions of its meaning.

Anyone who would make up his mind to try to express his moments of admiration and affection either orally or by letter as often as possible, would be making up his mind to do a very fine kind of social service.

GOOD TIMES COMING.

"He better times for which we bankers will come this way ere long." It was the good old village banker that gave this advice and song. He sized up every sign and taken, this safest of all men, before the cheerful words were spoken that made me young again. While other people may be driven to tramping logic like the village banker isn't given to talking through his hat. Perchance the tailor or the plumber or other thoughtless loon may think one swallow makes a summer, and whoop around too soon; how different the village banker! he backs no empty boom; he is more apt to see the canker than mark the gaudy bloom. So when he says good times are coming, it feels that they'll arrive, and take my lyre and do more thrumming than any bard alive. The banker's done a lot of dopping, and welshed the pros and cons, and says the night in which we're groping will have the best of dawn. Conditions have been growing ranker than voters well could bear, but you behold, the village banker sees good signs everywhere. And who are we to grouch and grumble when he who wields the dough predicts a great and early tumble in every kind of woe?

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