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The Old Marquis ; OR, The Girl of the Cloisters

CHAPTER I.
IN THE SUNLIGHT.

"Oh, not there, my lord! If you have never seen it, you would never find it out! Well, that is out of the question. It is, like the library, quite our own—no one but grandfather and I and the gardener ever goes into it."

"I should like to see it," he said, impulsively; then he flushed, and looked penitent.

"I mean—I beg your pardon—"

Her frank gaze rested on him innocently.

"Should you?" she said. "Shall I show it to you? I am very fond of it, but you will think nothing of it."

"Will you show it to me?" he responded, eagerly.

She nodded and moved toward the tapestry, and he saw that she had a key in her hand. Then she paused and glanced back at the dogs.

"The dogs! You are afraid they will do some damage; they mustn't come," he said, reading her look.

"Here, Pompey, Ranger, Pearly, out with you!" and he raised his whip, but not to strike them.

"Oh, no, no!" she said, quickly. "Don't send them away like that. They will think they have done something wrong, and that you are angry with them. I can't bear dogs to be unhappy! They shall come!"

"If you say so," he said, humbly remorseful for his loud voice and abrupt manner. "They will keep close by me."

She nodded, and, unlocking the door which he had seen, raised the curtain for him to pass through. He hid so, and stared with astonishment. On the other side of the door was a square garden such as one sees in old abbeys and convents. The walls that made the four sides were covered with ivy and creeping roses; bright spring flowers glistened in the beds, a tinkling fountain rose and fell in the middle of the miniature lawn, and on the side where the noonday sun fell stood a seat with a crimson and white canopy.

Lela stood beside him, looking up at his amazed eyes with the pure delight of a child at his surprise.

"Why!" he exclaimed, "it is a surprise! It is magic! Where is it? Where are we?" and he looked round the walls.

"You would never guess!" she said, smiling. "All these windows are in rooms of ours."

"Why, it is more beautiful than

anything else about the place!" he said.

She looked at him with a quick apprehension.

"You will not—?" Then she broke off and flushed with shame at the doubt.

He was quick to understand her. "Do you think I'd tell a living soul?" he said. "No. Why?"—he flushed—"I don't feel as if I had any right to enter—"

"Oh, but I asked you!" she said, with innocent eagerness to atone for her suspicion. "I asked you! Come and see the fountain," and she glided to the marble basin, and stood with her head bent a little on one side, listening.

Lord Edgar stood silent, not looking at the Naiad with her upturned arm, but at the exquisite living figure beside him.

He tried to say that "it was pretty," that "the water looked cool," any one of the modern commonplace that suggested themselves to him; but he could not speak. A sweet solemnity, almost sacred, seemed to have come over the tiny spot, and to unfold her like a charmed circle. He could not speak or take his eyes off her.

"Can you make out what it says?" she asked, turning her large eyes upon him seriously.

"The fountain, do you mean?" he asked, awaking with a start.

She nodded.

"Yes. It says something, but I can never quite make it out, because the sound is not always the same; there comes a break now and then; grandfather says that he can hear it say, 'I sing for those I love.' I can not, can you?"

"No—yes," he said, looking at her, and then away from her. Then, with a turn of impatient self-scorn, "How should I hear it, if you did not?"

His impetuosity startled her, and with a slight flush, she bent down and touched an opening water lily with her finger.

"Do you want it?" he said, eagerly, and instantly knelt and plucked it.

He did not see the spasm of pain that crossed her face, for she hid it from him, and when he looked up and offered her the bloom, she took it with a sweet smile.

How, he knew not, but presently he found himself sitting beside her on the rustic seat; the dogs were at their feet, Pompey asleep, with his great head on his outstretched paws, the hound leaning against the cream dress, Pearly coiled up in the sun. The charm of the hour and the place and their youth was upon them. It seemed to Lord Edgar the purest, happiest hour he had ever spent.

"And you live like this always?" he said, half to himself.

She smiled.

"Yes, always. Day follows day, month follows month, and, excepting that the leaves come and reign and fall, there is no change."

"It is a strange kind of life—unnatural; I mean—don't you find it dull?" he said, his abrupt, curt manner toned down as it had never been toned down before.

"Dull!" she said, thoughtfully. "No—no—no. But perhaps it is, and I do not know it."

"You are—happy?" he said, with a flush.

"Happy—yes," she answered, and she laughed, not noisily, but like the echo of the fountain.

The laugh emboldened him to put the other question that was burning on his tongue and at his heart.

"Do you think—do you—would you mind if I came here sometimes, I mean to see?"—"you," he was going to say, but seeing the faint dawning of innocent wonder in her eyes, changed it to—"the garden?"

"Oh, no," she murmured. "I am sure grandpapa would not mind. Besides, with a sudden start, as the thought flashed across her mind, "it is not ours; it is yours or the marquis'; it is all the same. Why, I had almost forgotten that!"

His broad forehead darkened.

"I wish you had quite forgotten it," he said. "I should like to think of this pretty place as quite your own, and—and that I was admitted as a favor."

"She laughed, leaning back and clasping her hands above her head slowly, so that she might look up at the sky.

"It is very kind of you to say so! Yes, of course, I will give you permission to come when you please—to your own! Is not that gracious of me, my lord?"

"Yes, it is," he said, with rough emphasis. "But—but—I wish—" He paused irresolute, hesitating, and her patient, serene, waiting gaze did not help him. "I wish—well, I wish you wouldn't call me 'my lord.' You didn't at first, you know. I wish you wouldn't."

"Did I not?" she said, trying to recollect. "But why should I not?"

"Because—" He hesitated, and kicked the smooth gravel with his thick boots; "they are the only words that sound ugly from your lips."

She laughed, as a school-girl would laugh at some show of petulance in another school-girl.

"Very well, my—there, you see I must call you something."

"Call me—" "Edgar," he was going to say, when a gentle step was heard behind them, and Mr. Temple appeared.

"Lela," he said, "have you seen Lord Edgar?"

Lord Edgar jumped up, with his usual impetuosity, setting the dogs off barking, and in an instant dispelling the sacred quietude.

"Here I am! What is it?" he said.

Mr. Temple looked at him, startled into remembrance by the sudden sight of him.

"Eh? Oh, my lord, the marquis has sent for you!"

"My father!" said Lord Edgar, with more surprise than pleasure.

"Then," reluctantly, "I must go."

He turned as he spoke and held out his hand; but Lela had risen, and was looking down at the tierrier, and too awed to persist, he let his hand drop.

"Good-morning," he said, coming close to her. "I—you will not forget that I may come here sometimes, Miss Temple?"

"No," she said, simply, with the same frank, pure look of maidenly innocence. "Good-by, my—"

He stopped, almost with a frown of pain; then called the dogs, and strode through the door-way.

Lela looked after him pensively.

"Thank Heaven, he has gone!" murmured the old man. "There is not much chance of his troubling this side of the house again, the gods be praised! He'd turn the library into a dog kennel, and—this pretty garden of yours into a—a rat ring! I do hope we shall not see any more of him."

Lela looked down at the water in the fountain basin, and then at the silver spray, and sighed.

Why did not the good god Pan spring from the fount to whisper in her ears:

"If thou wouldst have peace, echo that thought in thine own heart." But no god came to whisper warning and counsel; none came to remind

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her that he who had just departed was noble by birth and destined to be of the world's mighty ones, while she was simply Lela Temple, the librarian's grand-daughter, almost a servant in the house in which he would be master. Fate has no warning hand for us; when she points, it is behind her.

CHAPTER II.
"FIRE AND ICE."

LORD EDGAR passed through the library and out by the terrace, to one of the entrances to that portion of the Abbey occupied by the marquis.

He felt rather confused, and almost bewildered, as a man does who wakes suddenly from a dream, and once he stopped and looked back as if to reassure himself that the whole incident had not been a freak of his imagination.

"Oh, it's real enough!" he muttered, with self-mockery. "I'm not half clever enough to imagine such a lovely creature as that, or such a vision as that garden; it's all real enough!"

At the door Mr. Palmer, the butler, stood awaiting him. He was always "Mr." to everybody, and quite a personage in his way; he was dressed in somber black, and wore a spotless cravat, which gave him the appearance of a bishop, or a dean at the very least.

"Well, Mr. Palmer, what's the matter?" asked Lord Edgar.

"His lordship wishes to see you, my lord," said Palmer, solemnly.

"Oh, all right!" assented Lord Edgar, with an entire absence of joyfulness in his face. "I'll come. Been looking for me long?"

"Nearly half an hour, my lord. His lordship is waiting."

"Ah, well, then I'd better come as I am. I was going to change. Never mind. Here, call one of the grooms, will you, to take the dogs?" and he flung the whip to the stately Palmer, who, with a startled and shocked expression of countenance, was fain to catch it, but instantly dropped it on a chair, and pointed to it, as the groom came up, with an air of wounded dignity. Lord Edgar went up the broad stairs, covered with double Turkey carpet, so that not even his footsteps were audible, went up very much like a school-boy going back to school after the holidays. An interview with his father was a very rare event; the last had taken place some three years ago, and had lasted about ten minutes. The two men, father and son, were, as old Mr. Temple said, fire and water, and he might have said ice in place of water; Lord Edgar took after his mother—was warm and impetuous, and was sure to offend the cold, impassible old peer before he had been in his presence five minutes.

(To be continued.)

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The waist pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 requires 3 1/2 yards of 27 inch material. The width of skirt at lower edge is about 1 1/2 yards.

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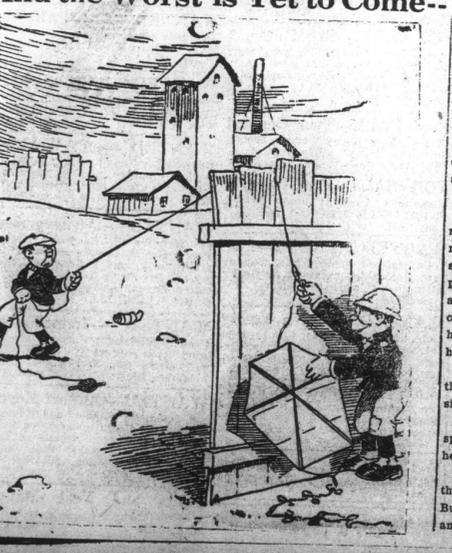
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ON THE EASTERN FRONTS.

PARIS, March 27. Stephen Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, announced in the Chamber of Deputies last night that the Archangel front the Allies forces totalled 34,765, made up of the following nationalities: British, 15,100; United States, 4,520; French, 3,245; Italians, 1,340; Serbians, 1,290; Russians, 11,770. On the Serbian front the Allied total was 324,500, of whom 4,900 are Canadians, 1,600 British, 7,500 Americans, 7,600 French, 10,000 Italians, 4,000 Serbians, 210,000 Russians, 12,000 Poles, 4,000 Roumanians, 2,700 Japanese, 55,000 Czech Slovaks. The total forces of the Allies on the various eastern fronts, Pichon stated, was 850,000. This total was divided as follows: French, 140,000; Roumanians, 190,000; British, 140,000; Italians, 40,000; Serbians, 140,000; Greeks, 200,000.

REVOLUTION IN GALICIA.

VIENNA, March 17. (Via Copenhagen)—A wireless dispatch received from the Soviet Government at Moscow, declares that a revolution in Galicia is in a state of revolution. The movement is described as having begun in the oil districts near Dnepropetrovsk, where the workers established a Soviet Government, and to have spread to the surrounding districts. Troops dispatched by the Polish Government, the message asserts, joining the movement. The Lemberg Soviet is added, has declared a general strike.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLAND.

PARIS, March 27. A great military campaign against Poland is to be opened by the Russian Soviet Government this spring, it was declared by M. Joffe, the former Bolshevik Ambassador at Berlin, at a recent meeting, according to a word received by the Polish National Committee in Paris.

SPARTACANS PREPARING.

BERLIN, March 26. Alleged secret orders of General Von Luttwitz to his regimental commanders, informing them that the Spartacans are planning a new revolution for the purpose of introducing the Soviet system, not only among the troops, but among the civil population, are printed by the Radical newspaper Republik. A rumor broadcast in Berlin that a renewal of the Spartacan uprisings was due about Whitsunday (June 8th) coincides with information in the alleged orders.

ANXIETY FOR MISSIONS.

WASHINGTON, March 27. Belgrade despatches to the State Department dated March 23, and received to-day, said, at last, reports of German financial experts at Weimar to-day, preparatory to going to Versailles Sunday, Germany seems to feel that peace is nearer than she.

FEELS PEACE IS NEARER.

BERLIN, March 26. With the arrival of an American food ship yesterday and the conference of German financial experts at Weimar to-day, preparatory to going to Versailles Sunday, Germany seems to feel that peace is nearer than she.

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