Countess Westerleigh

CHAPTER VI.

(Concluded.)

easel and paced up and down the room, his smooth and rather cat-like thick rugs; then returned to his work with a sigh and a low-muttered

Presently there came a knock. He turned the portrait round with its face to the easel, and unlocked the door. A correctly dressed page stood waiting.

"The Duchess of Mudshire, sir," he said.

Senley Tyers nodded. "In five minutes," he said.

There was no valid reason why the Duchess of Mudshire should not hav been admitted at once: but Senley Tyers was not only a talented artist but a clever man, and he had learned something more than how to paint during the years he had been struggling and starving. He had learned the great secret, that in nine cases out of ten the world is ready to take you at your own valuation; that if you want to win the favor of the rich. the titled, the fashionable, you must not crawl and cringe, but assume to be, even if you do not feel, indiffer ent to their friendship, and pretend to feel a complete contempt for their opinion. The great world will d anything for you while you keep i at your feet; but kneel to it, and i will kick and spurn you.

So he kept the Duchess of Mudshire waiting while he smoked an other cigarette; then lounging in chair, with the cat on his knee, strucl

a silver bell, and only rose languidly setting the cat down carefully, as the lady entered the room.

Her grace was past fifty, and was if the truth must be told, commonplace, if not vulgar, in appearance; removed her mistress's bonnet and near the door.

"Good-morning, Mr. Tyers," said her grace. "I thought you said one

at her absently

coolly arranging a curtain, then calmly pointing to the sitters' dais and chair.

The duchess laughed

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ready."

"No." he said. "Your grace does iot like being kept waiting. Neither do I."

The duchess stared at him, as she were on the point of being angry hen shrugged her shoulders and 'aughed, as though she were saying: 'These extraordinary creatures mus e humored and tolerated. It is folv to be angry with them."

"Five minutes, more or less, can natter very little to your grace," he vent on. "They may make a day's vork to an artist."

"I see. I suppose you want me t apologize for keeping you waiting,' he said, good-humoredly. "Oh, no," he murmured, softly, in

n indescribable tone of contempt: I should be the last to tempt your "Really-!" she began, then broke

ff, as he lifted the canvas he had een painting from the easel. "Wha s that picture?" "A portrait," he said, setting

own carefully, with its face to the

"Will you let me see it?" she ask

"Pardon," he murmured. "I neve: how an unfinished portrait to any ther person than the original." Her Grace of Mudshire colored

"I think you are more than ordinrily rude this morning, Mr. Tyers,

Senley Tyers bowed, and placed er-flattering?"

he extent of contradicting your race." he said. "Please do not rily. palette and brush. "I have succeeded. I think in giving a pleasant ev-Her grace tapped her foot angrily. "Really, Mr. Tyers," she said, with laugh, "you are rather unreasonble. You do your best to put your

sitters in a bad humor, and then plame them for showing it." He smiled faintly, but made no reponse, and waited, brush in hand. The great lady smoothed her ruf-

led feathers and dispelled the frown. She was a good-natured, simpleninded person, and she was very anxous to have her portrait painted by the artist who was rapidly becoming famous and fashionable. Senley Tyers glanced at her, as if

to ascertain whether the ill-humored expression had vanished, then with a skillful touch or two arranged the

slowly to the end of the room, lighted a cigarette at the lamp, and then

He did not ask her permission to Her grace was not fond of silence,

and after a time she addressed a remark or two to him. "I suppose you have a great many portraits to paint, Mr. Tyers?"

"More than I can execute." "Yes? That was the reason why

you refused to paint Lady Landley's

"Not at all. Lady Landley insistbrother artist who does not mind being laughed at-who can afford it, I

You are not afraid of losing your patrons, Mr. Tyers?"

"No," he replied, slowly, and in tent upon his work. "Six months ago I was penniless and starving. I am too familiar with hunger to be afraid

"Dear me! I didn't know. And now, I suppose, you are quite rich?" ence which the great seem to consider one of their privileges. "Rich enough to do as I please: no

man on earth can be richer," he said, "Will you come to a little 'At

Home' of mine on Thursday next, Mr. Tvers?" she said. "No, I thank your grace," was the

slow, languid response. The duchess bit her lip. She was not accustomed to meet with refus

"I am sorry you are engaged," she said. "You would meet some nie

people.' I think."

"I am not engaged," he said. shall spend Thursday evening in m ale would not be nice to me, your grace. They would wonder who am, and why on earth I was there: and I should wonder, too."

"You are an extraordinary man, she said, laughing, but with a fain inge of annoyance in her laugh. " He smiled.

"Not in the very lest, your grace,"

He glanced at an old English

clock on a carved bracket. "Let me see what you have done.

a smile—a smile of satisfaction beamed in her commonplace face. "Oh, it's very good-very good," she said: "but-but isn't it rather-

"Very," said Senley Tyers, without looking up from his palette. Her grace started and flushed ang-



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Her grace laughed and thought ed at any better than you do, Mr

few strokes made the face mor truthful, and, necessarily, plaine

"How is that?" he asked. Her grace stood, red and uncon fortable, her eyes fixed upon the no too candid portrait.

"You-you are spoiling it,"

and older.

"Exactly," he said. "Let me beg you to go back to your place, and leave me to paint my picture, your grace."

she said, beckoning to her maid. will come again to-morrow."

"When then?" she demanded aughtily.

He consulted an ivory tablet. "This day three months, if you please, duchess," he said, in exactly

Her grace stared at him, grew red ler and hotter, opened her lips, as if o crush him with a haughty rejoinfer then marched to her place, and resumed her seat without a word.

A faint smile played about Senley fyers' thin lips, as he painted out the cruelly candid lines and blotches e had put in, and worked on until laid down his brush and stood modown.

The maid put on her bonnet and cloak, and her grace swept to the door. Senley Tyers glided to it and

said, in his soft, listless voice, "This day week at the same hour."

onged to say something insolent, out -well, she wanted her portrait

in the Academy very, very badly, and smothering her wrath, she bowed and departed. Senley Tyers dropped into a chair

Tiger," he murmured to the cat.

(To be continued.)

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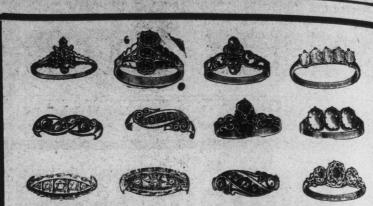
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