

Cynthia's Chauffeur

By LOUIS TRACY

Copyright by McLeod & Allen, Toronto

(Continued) Perhaps he signed as he turned away, but his own evidence on that point would be inconclusive, since the first object his wondering eyes dwelt on was the graceful figure of Cynthia Vanreuen.

Medenham was obviously disappointed by the recognition of her deputy chauffeur. In the girl's case some degree of surprise was justified. It is a truism of social life that far more differences are attracted to the seemingly democratic severity of evening dress than to any other class of masculine attire.

"Of course, Cynthia was easily first in the effort to recover disturbed wits. Like myself, you have been tempted out by this beautiful night, Mr. Fitzroy," she said.

"Then Mr. Fitzroy was a concession to his attire; somehow she imagined it would favor of presumption if she addressed him as an interior. She could not define her mental attitude in words, but her quick intelligence responded to its subtle influence as a mirrored lake records the passing breeze.

"I am prepared to vouch for any explanation so long as it brings you here, Miss Vanreuen," he said.

"Do you wish, then, to consult me on any matter?" she asked, with American directness.

"I was standing here and thinking of you," he said. "Perhaps that accounts for your appearance. Since you have visited India you may have heard that the higher Brahmins, when they are anxious that another person shall act according to their desire, resort to elaborate and elaborate means to induce a man, they call it, to suppose the same principle applied to a woman."

"I believe that you are a higher Brahmin than you would if I should permit. Your theory of sitting on the ground, is it not a bit in the line of the East?" he asked.

"I wanted to ask you a few questions, Miss Vanreuen," he explained. "Pray do as they say in Boston."

"I assure you there is not a man living who understands my special type of car better," he protested.

"Well, I am glad to hear it. I was shy of telling you when we reached the hotel, but you understand, of course, that I pay your expenses during this trip. The arrangement with Simmons was that my father and I should go for petrol and allowed twenty shillings a day for the chauffeur's meals and lodgings, is that satisfactory?"

"Quite satisfactory, Miss Vanreuen," said Medenham, fully alive to the girl's effective ruse for the re-establishment of matters on a proper footing.

"So you don't need to worry about Mr. Devar. In any event, since you refused my offer to hire you for the tour, you will not see a great deal of her," she went on, a trifle hurriedly.

"There only remains one other point," he said, trying to help her. "Would you mind giving me Mr. Vanreuen's address in Paris?"

"He is staying at the Ritz—but why do you want to know that?" she demanded with a sudden lifting of eyebrows for the hope was strong in her that he might be induced to change his plans so far as the next nine days were concerned.

"A man in my present position ought always to ascertain the whereabouts of millionaires interested in motoring," he answered promptly.

"Gracious me! why not?" "There is a certain class of boisterous holiday-makers who might annoy you—by exercising a crude humor which is deemed peculiarly suitable to the season, though it would be none the less distressing to you."

of its twelfth-century castle towering from the crest of an eminence. Two miles to the northwest they came upon ancient Steyning, now a sleepy country town, but of greater importance than Bath or Birmingham, or Southampton in the day of the Conqueror, and redolent of the past by reason of its churches, with an early Norman chancel, its houses bearing stone moldings and windows millions of the Elizabethan period, and its quaint street names, such as Dog Lane, Sheepen Street, and Chantry Green, where two martyrs were burnt.

"Thence the way lay through the leafy woodland of West Sussex, when the Mercury crept softly through Midhurst and Petersfield into Hampshire, and so to Winchester, where Cynthia, wrapped in the cathedral, walked a whole reel of films, and bought some curios carved out of oak imbedded in the walls when the Conqueror held England in his grip."

"You put up at the Bath Hotel, I think?" he said.

"I would like to very much, if you have no objection. But—please forgive me for touching on money matters—the charges may be rather dear. Won't you let me tell the head waiter to include your bill with ours?"

"On the strict condition that you deduct twelve shillings from my account," he said, stealing a glance at her.

"I shall be quite business-like, I promise."

"What a lovely landscape, of some fancy that took her, perhaps, at some time to the hostelry where he had booked a room for his master, and that Mrs. Devar, after one stay and an indignant whisper to Cynthia in the dining-room."

"Can that man in evening dress, sitting alone near the window, by any possibility be our chauffeur?"

and the barrier of rank is every broken down more and more every day. You see, it is the easiest in the world to enter. You tolerate people in the highest circles who would certainly suffer from cold feet if they showed up too prominently in New York or Philadelphia, but it is rather out of fashion to be so exclusive."

"Our aristocracy has such an assured position that it can afford to unbend," quoted the other.

"Oh, is that it? I heard my father say the other day that it has often made him tired to see the way in which some of your titled nonentities grovel before a Lithuanian Jew who is a power on the Rand. But unbending is a different thing to groveling, perhaps?"

"Very probably," agreed Mrs. Devar cheerfully.

CHAPTER IV. Shadows With Occasional Gleams. Mrs. Devar ate her soup in petted silence. Among the diners were at least two peers and a countess, all of whom she had met at one time or another during the last twenty years.

"But to-night she was beginning to feel that the small coteries of the aristocracy were carrying democratic training too far; it was quite possible that a request to modify an unconventional freedom of manner where Fitzroy was concerned would meet with a blank refusal."

"I am sorry you are so tired," she said glibly. "I am sorry you missed seeing Salisbury Cathedral. Why didn't you go?"

"Because Fitzroy remarked that the cathedral would always remain at Salisbury, whereas a perfect June day in the New Forest does not come once in a blue moon when one really wants it."

"I'm awfully sorry," he said, "but the telegram I have just received affects all my plans. I must hurry away at this instant. When will you be in town? Then I shall call, praying meanwhile that there may be no Ducrots or Devars there to blight a glorious gossip. If you bring me up to date as to affairs in Paris, I'll reciprocate about the giddy equator. How—or perhaps I ought to say where—is Portchaw?"

"In China," snapped her ladyship, fully alive to Medenham's polite evasion of her blandishments.

"By gad," he laughed, "that is a long way from Bournemouth. Well, goodbye. Keep me a date in Clarges Street."

"Clarges Street is off the map," she said coldly. "It's South Belgrave, varying on Piccadilly, nowadays. That is why Portchaw is in China."

"I am afraid my sympathies rather ran away with my manners," she said.

"I shall be quite business-like, I promise."

"Why must I not go to that pier?"

"Why must I not go to that pier?"

her rather woe in London, and Medenham did not hesitate to cut short the banker's awkward gallantries by throwing the Mercury into her stride with a whirr.

"By Jove, Ducrot," said someone, "your pretty friend's car jumped on like a see-saw under the starting gate."

"What's that?" "It strikes me as an impudent puppy."

"Anyhow," he can swing a motor. See that! For the Mercury had executed a corker's corker movement between several vehicles with the stenuous grace of a greyhound.

"Well, I have full confidence in you, but don't embroil us with the public, for we have a good deal to see to-day, I understand."

"Then he heard the strenuous voice addressing Cynthia.

"Millicent Portchaw says that Glasgow is heaven and a well-to-do peaceful dream. I visited Cheddar once, some years ago, but it rained, and I felt like a watermelon."

"You seem to be in a hurry to leave Bournemouth, Fitzroy."

"I'm awfully sorry," he said, "but the telegram I have just received affects all my plans. I must hurry away at this instant. When will you be in town? Then I shall call, praying meanwhile that there may be no Ducrots or Devars there to blight a glorious gossip. If you bring me up to date as to affairs in Paris, I'll reciprocate about the giddy equator. How—or perhaps I ought to say where—is Portchaw?"

"In China," snapped her ladyship, fully alive to Medenham's polite evasion of her blandishments.

"By gad," he laughed, "that is a long way from Bournemouth. Well, goodbye. Keep me a date in Clarges Street."

"Clarges Street is off the map," she said coldly. "It's South Belgrave, varying on Piccadilly, nowadays. That is why Portchaw is in China."

"I am afraid my sympathies rather ran away with my manners," she said.

"I shall be quite business-like, I promise."

"Why must I not go to that pier?"

"Why must I not go to that pier?"



SIMMONDS



Awful developments

of a comfortable inn at Yeovil it was she, and not Cynthia, who suggested a social departure.

(To be continued)