

SELF-RAISED

BY CLAUDIA D. M. SOUTHWORTH

"You had just as well close that window, Claudia. It will give us all cold; and besides you see but little now."

"I can see Night drawing her curtain of darkness around the bed of the troubled waters. It is worth watching," murmured Claudia dreamily.

"Booh!" was the elegant response of the viscount; "you will see enough of the North Sea before you have done with it, I fancy." And with an emphatic clap he let the window down.

Claudia shrugged her shoulders and turned away, too proud to dispute a point that she was powerless to decide.

They sped on towards Edinburgh, through the darkness of one of the darkest nights that ever fell. Even had the window been open Claudia could not have caught a glimpse of the scenery. She had no idea that they were near the capital of Scotland until the train ran into the station. Then all was bustle among those who intended to get out there.

But through all the bustle Lord Vincent and his party kept their seats.

"I am very weary of this train. I have not left my seat for many hours. Can we not stop over night here? I should like to see Edinburgh by daylight," inquired Claudia.

"What did you say?" asked Lord Vincent with nonchalance. Claudia repeated her question, adding: "I should like to remain a day or two in Edinburgh. I wish to see the Castle, and Holyrood Palace and Abbey, and Roslyn and Craig-miller, and—"

"Everything else, of course, Booh! We have no time for that. I have taken our tickets for Aberdeen, and mean to sleep at Castle Crag tonight," replied the viscount.

Claudia turned away her head to conceal the indignant tears that arose to her eyes. She was beginning to discover that her comfort, convenience, and inclination were just about the last circumstances that her husband was disposed to take into consideration. What a dire reverse for her, whose will from her earliest recollection had been the law to all around her!

The train started again and sped on its way through the darkness of the night towards Aberdeen where they arrived about eight o'clock.

"Here at last the railway journey ends," thank Heaven," sighed Claudia, as the train slackened its speed and crawled into the station. And the usual bustle attending its arrival ensued.

Fortunately for Claudia the viscount found himself too much fatigued after about sixteen hours' ride to go farther that night. So he directed Mr. Frisbie to engage two cabs to take himself and his party to a hotel.

And when they were brought up he handed Claudia, who was scarcely able to stand, into the first one, and ordered Frisbie to put the "gorillas" into the other. And they drove to a fourth or fifth rate inn, a degree or two dirtier dingier and darker than the one they had left at Liverpool.

But Claudia was too utterly worn out in body, mind and spirit to find fault with any shelter that promised to afford her the common necessities of life, of which she had been deprived for so many hours.

She drank the tea that was brought her, without questioning its quality.

And as soon as she laid her head on the pillow she sank into the dreamless sleep of utter exhaustion. She awoke late the next morning to take her first look at the old town through a driving rain that lashed the narrow windows of her bedroom. Lord Vincent had already risen and gone out.

She rang for her servants. Old Katie answered the bell, entering with uplifted hands and eyes, exclaiming: "Well, my ladyship! if this ain't the outlandishest country as ever was! Coming over from the other side we had the ocean unnerneath of us, and now 'pears to me like we has got it overhead of us, by the fog and mist and rain perpetual! And if this is being of lords and ladyships, I'd haap liefer be misters and mist'esses, myself."

"I quite agree with you, Katie," sighed old Katie mysteriously. "My lordship's down there, waiting for his breakfast now. Pretty place to fetch a respectable culled pussion to, let alone a lady! We was one comfort, we won't stay here long, cause I heard my lordship order Mr. Frisbie to go and take two inside places, and four outside places in the stage coach, as leaves this mornin' for Ban. Ban, 'Ban,' it 'pears like it's been all ban and no 'bleasin' ever since we done left Tanglewood."

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