

AUDREY'S KNIGHT.

By EPES W. SARGENT.

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Across the snow clad fields the enchanted castle was brilliantly lighted, and Audrey Sheldon, scanning with longing eyes the wintry wazings, sighed as she tried to picture the comfort hidden by the gray walls.

It was not really a castle nor yet enchanted, but it had pleased Major Kirkwood to have his home a copy of a castle on the Rhine which he had seen on one of his summer trips, and Audrey's imagination supplied the rest.

The major was a bachelor and seldom entertained on a large scale, but every night the lights flashed across the glittering snow, and Audrey loved to stand by the window and imagine that there lived the knight who some day would come to rescue her from the ogre as represented by Mrs. Thompson-Terhune, the major's niece and neighbor.

It was only two years since Audrey herself had been a social queen of a small domain, but something had gone wrong in her father's bank. She never understood what it was, but his personal fortune had gone to sustain the wrecked credit of the institution, and the treachery of some of the directors combined with the wreck of his fortune had sent Henry Sheldon to his grave.

Audrey had faced the situation bravely, and for the two years since her father's death she had been generous to the two Thompson-Terhune girls at a salary so absurdly small that Mrs. Thompson-Terhune lived in daily dread that some one might discover how small was the sum paid and coax the girl away.

Audrey turned away from the window and wearily sat down at the desk to correct the girls' exercises. It was a severely plain apartment, for Mrs. Thompson-Terhune was an ambitious climber whose aims were far in excess of the income she enjoyed, and her money was spent only where it would show.

A few railroad maps were the only wall decorations of the schoolroom, and three hard wooden chairs, a shabby desk too old for office use, a folding bed and a wardrobe completed the furnishing. It was at once the schoolroom and Audrey's apartment.

Patiently the girl worked at her task while she thought bitterly of the gayety downstairs, where preparations were being made for a dinner party in honor of Major Kirkwood's birthday.

Long after the usual hour the housekeeper would send up a trayful of broken meats, the leavings of the feast, and she would eat it on the top of the desk that also served as a bureau and dressing table. She thought of the time when she would have been one of the guests, and her dainty head fell forward on the arms that were flung upon the desk.

The nervous closing of a door roused her, and she sprang to her feet to face Mrs. Thompson-Terhune.

"You must help me out, Miss Sheldon," she said abruptly. "I am in a most terrible plight. That horrid Martha Homer and her crowd are not coming over. That leaves just thirteen at table, and Major Kirkwood is so horribly superstitious. You simply must pretend to be one of the guests. No one around here knows you, and it will be all right."

"But I have nothing to wear except the most simple frocks," said Audrey. "I sold my evening gowns, you know, to get money for the purchase of things I really needed."

"I have some things that may fit. We are almost of a size. Maria shall help you. Come with me." The hostess turned abruptly and led the way to her own apartments. She was accustomed to implicit obedience from her employees, and Audrey knew better than to object.

She smiled to herself as the deft French maid helped her into a quiet gown of gray. Audrey was a favorite with the servants, and with loving care Marie pinned and draped until she was satisfied with the result.

Audrey was just in time to descend the stairs and receive with Mrs. Thompson-Terhune the first of the guests. With the strange feeling that it was all a part of the enchantment, she moved through the rooms, chatting with the guests until dinner was announced.

Mrs. Thompson-Terhune counted much upon her prospects from the major. He was still hale and hearty, but she lived in pleasurable anticipation of his unexpected taking off, and she sadly needed the money that would come to her at his death.

His world was law with her, and when he insisted that Audrey be placed next to him at table the hostess promptly changed the seating arrangements even while she planned that Audrey should be dismissed the next day with salary in lieu of a notice.

Audrey, all unconscious of the anxieties of her hostess, enjoyed herself to the full, and enjoyment transformed the little face that had become so wan and somber in the last few months.

Knowing how anxious Mrs. Thompson-Terhune was that her guest of honor might enjoy himself, Audrey exerted herself to be entertaining with such good success that the major insisted that Audrey should be brought over to the castle for luncheon some day before her return to town.

"Miss Sheldon unfortunately is returning to town tomorrow," said Mrs. Thompson-Terhune acidly as she gave the signal to the ladies to rise in order to terminate the argument.

The men were not long in joining the ladies, and the major made straight for Audrey's side, nor would he be dislodged until the party broke up.

As the last carriage rolled away Audrey turned to her employer with eyes that danced. "It was such fun to masquerade!" she cried, with a little laugh. "I wonder what the major would say could he know that my return to town in the morning was merely a change to the nursery governess."

"You will go up to town in the morning," was the quiet response. "I will pay you a month's salary instead of the usual notice. I cannot have my darling children in the charge of a person who so shamelessly pursues a rich man."

The unexpectedness of the dismissal was such a shock that Audrey was too dazed to argue against the charge. She had nowhere to go, and the pitifully small sum she would receive would not last more than two weeks. The happy light gone from her eyes, she groped her way to her room, scarce seeing through her tears.

There was no relenting the next morning, and, with her few belongings packed in the tiny trunk, she was driven to the station for the early train. To her surprise the major was impatiently pacing the platform in the rear of the diminutive depot. He hurried forward to assist her to alight, but Audrey shrank from him.

"I thought you would be going to town on this train," he cried exultantly. "I'm going too. Didn't Isabel come to see you off?"

"It was all a mistake," said Audrey, trying to speak bravely. "It was because of your aversion to thirteen at table that I was called upon. I was Mrs. Thompson-Terhune's governess."

"Was?" he echoed. "So that's the

trouble, is it? I guess I do not need more ample explanation. My dear, my niece's fears are well founded," he continued bluntly. "I did fall in love with you. That's why I am here this morning to ask if I may call upon you in town."

"I don't even know where I am going," demurred Audrey.

"I do," said the major, with decision. "You are going to be the guest of my partner's wife until you find a new place—or find that, after all, an old man may still be worthy of love. Do you think that will be so—so hard?"

"Not so very," confessed the girl shyly, and in her heart she knew that already this kindly old man had won her affections. She had not thought of his money, but it was inexpressibly pleasant to be looked after instead of looking after others, and as the train sped along the side of the river Audrey knew that it would not be long before she would come back again to be chateleine of the castle of her valiant knight.

Tired Eyes.

People speak about their eyes being tired, meaning that the retina, or seeing portion, of the eye is fatigued, but such is not the case, as the retina hardly ever gets tired. The fatigue is in the inner and outer muscle attached to the eyeball and the muscle of accommodation which surrounds the lens of the eye. When a near object is to be looked at this muscle relaxes and allows the lens to thicken, increasing its refractive power. The inner and outer muscles are used in covering the eye on the object to be looked at, the inner one being especially used when a near object is looked at. It is in the three muscles mentioned that the fatigue is felt, and relief is secured temporarily by closing the eyes or gazing at far distant objects. The usual indication of strain is a redness of the rim of the eyelid, betokening a congested state of the inner surface, accompanied with some pain. Sometimes this weariness indicates the need of glasses rightly adapted to the person, and in other cases the true remedy is to massage the eye and its surroundings as far as may be with the hand wet in cold water.

The Alternatives.

They had not been engaged very long, but already George had made it apparent that the salary of a Junior shop assistant did not admit of an ecstatic existence amid a sea of diamond rings, theater stalls or even chocolate creams.

Recently they walked together to a neighboring village. The road was muddy, the wind bitter, and Daisy felt that life would be better worth living when she had an opportunity of reviving herself with tea and hot scones.

George hesitated outside the only restaurant in the place, and she smiled hopefully. His hand stole to his trousers pocket. He fumbled nervously there for a moment.

"Er—Daisy," he said at last, "will you have something to eat now and walk back, or shall we have nothing to eat and go back by train?"—Pearson's.

Holy Toity.

Selden in his Table Talk writes: "In Queen Elizabeth's time gravity and state were kept up. In King James' time things were pretty well. But in King Charles' time there has been nothing but French-more and the cushion dance, omnium gatherum, toity polly, hoite cometoite."

This phrase in modern French is haut comme toit.

The late Dr. Brewer, in his "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," says: "The most probable derivation I know is this: What we call 'seesaw' used to be called 'holy toity,' holly being connected with hoit (to leap up), our 'high,' 'height,' and toity being 'other hoit'—i. e., first one side hoits, then the other side."—London Notes and Queries.

Rotundity of Earth.

We are assured by competent authority that Thales of Miletus taught that the earth was of a globular form so early as 640 B. C. Pythagoras demonstrated from the varying altitudes of the stars that the earth must be round. Aristarchus of Samos maintained that the earth turned on its own axis and revolved about the sun, which doctrine was held by his contemporaries as so absurd and revolting that the philosopher nearly lost his life B. C. 280. The wisdom of the ancients was, of course, lost sight of in the darkness of the "middle ages," and it took Galilei and Copernicus to restore the old knowledge to the world.—New York American.

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