

HARTLEY'S CALLER.

By COLIN S. COLLINS.

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"Lady to see you," announced Jimmie, one of the office boys, with a deference that he showed only to Hartley, the dramatic critic, and Murphy, the sporting editor.

"I'm not interested in fruit," was the cold response as Hartley turned to his desk. He hated all women at the moment, for he had had to do a thing which would probably cost him the love of the one woman he really did care for.

He had had to tell the cruel truth about Norma Keating as an actress, and he felt that the high spirited girl never would forgive him.

Jimmie, the persistent, hung over the desk. "She don't look like an actress," he declared, using the argument he knew to be most potent.

"I can't see any one who does not send in a card," declared Hartley as he turned to his work again, and Jimmie dashed out presently to return with a bit of pasteboard.

With a start Hartley read Norma's name and gave orders that she be ushered in. It was better perhaps that since there was to be a quarrel they should meet on his own ground.

Somehow, with the familiar surroundings, he felt more safe than he ever could in the parlor of the little actress' suit at the hotel. With a sternness that indifferently masked the misery that he felt he prepared to receive his caller.

He had expected that she would come storming in to denounce him for his criticism and to declare him biased and unfair.

He was braced for the shock and fully prepared for the sight of the dejected little woman who came timidly into his dingy office, her rich fur forming a strange contrast to the bare walls and cheap furniture.

Jimmie slipped away after one last admiring glance, and then the girl raised her eyes to Hartley's and met the pity in his bravely.

"I did not come to reproach you for your notice," she said, with a quick appreciation of his attitude. "It was your right to say what you pleased. I paid a big price for the special performance in order to get the metropolitan notices, and in doing so I exposed myself to every form of critical attack.

"I suppose that you are expected to be severe on beginners, to ridicule them and beat them down and force them into their proper places.

"You demand that we start at the bottom. I can see now that it was absurd to think that I could win favorable comment from the great men who have made their reputation more through the savageness of their attacks than through their ability as critics.

"And yet you said you had not come to reproach," he asked gently. Even in her bitterness he noticed a new note in the rich voice. It hurt him to think that he was in part responsible for that little catch of pain which would sound, try as she would to be hard and cynical.

It was as if her whole quivering soul was laid bare in spite of the dress of words with which she sought to clothe it.

"I did not mean to say that," she cried. "I only meant to come and ask you if you would let me have my photographs back. You and the rest of your confreres have beaten me. I am in retreat. I am going as far from New York as I can. I want to take with me everything that is mine."

"You should have sent your agent and spared yourself," he reminded her gently. "I will see that the pictures are found for you. Will you sit down?"

He indicated a chair as he rang for a boy, and presently Jimmie went away with instructions that Miss Keating's photographs were to be returned by the art department at once.

Neither spoke until the boy had laid the package down and had departed for the outer office. Then Hartley rose and placed them on the chair beside her.

"There is another one," she said uncertainly, "the one that I gave you. May I have it back, please?"

"If you wish," he promised as he turned again to his desk to draw from one of the recesses a photograph with a flowing autograph across its face.

"Does your anger go so deep that you are unwilling to leave me even this souvenir of a friendship that I shall always treasure in my memory?" he asked. "May I not keep it?"

"To add to your sacrificial heap," she

retorted bitterly. "I suppose you must have a goodly collection of those you have fayed."

"I have few photographs—and few friends among the women of the profession," he said simply as he opened a drawer for an envelope. "I had hoped to number your first among those few."

He held the envelope toward her, and for a moment she hesitated. She seemed about to leave the room, but she turned and faced him again.

"You told me once that you never would marry an actress," she said tensely. "Was it because—because you did not want me on the stage that you—that you wrote as you did?"

"I have made no secret of my admiration for you," said Hartley simply, "and I may have made the remark you attribute to me, but it was with no desire to drive you from the stage that I framed my criticism as I did."

"Can't you see," he continued passionately, "the awful position in which I was placed. If I praised your acting, I should have made my paper the laughingstock of the town. If I spoke the truth I knew that I should lose you. Every line of the story in this morning's paper was studied that I might speak as warmly as I dared without stultifying the paper."

"It was a little better than the rest," admitted Norma, "but I thought you had been a little kind so that I would not suspect how you had induced the other critics to be so merciless."

"On the contrary, I saw none of the boys," he declared. "I was far too sick at heart to mix with them and hear their ugly comments."

"Was I really as bad as that?" asked the girl wonderingly. "I thought it was because I was an amateur and had the money to hire the theater and the company. They always jump upon the rich amateurs. I had heard. I thought that was it. Was I really as bad as all that?"

"Don't ask me," pleaded Hartley but the girl persisted.

"You have a good voice and a good presence," he said slowly. "You have some crude ability, but that is all. You lack the spark of genius. Even money cannot buy that."

"Then you think I will never be an actress?" she asked with quivering lip. Hartley shook his head, and she turned away to the window, pressing her brow to the cool pane, against which the sheet rattled angrily.

For several minutes she stood thus looking out into the whirling snow and hall with unseeing eyes, while Hartley silently watched her.

He would have given the world to take her in his arms and comfort her, but instinctively he realized that she must fight her battle alone. She was the one woman in all the world to him, and yet he dared not speak.

At last she turned, and now her eyes were smiling, though her lips still were drawn and white.

"Why struggle against unanimous condemnation? You must be right," she conceded. "I never shall make an actress, and you said that you never would marry an actress."

"I'd marry you if you were Bernhard and Duse in one," he cried, "but I rather would marry just you, dear. Will you have me? In spite of the blow that I have struck your pride can you love me?"

"I hate to marry a wife beater," she said, with a wan little smile. "But, Frank, I think I'd rather have your love than to be a great actress, and I don't mind the notice—now."

Jimmie, coming in with a card, turned and fled precipitately.

"I used to think that Mr. Murphy had the best of it, goin' to prize fights an' ball games," he said reflectively. "But I guess it's Mr. Hartley that has the cinch. I'd rather kiss that pippin than know the hull ball team."

English Hunting Dress. When out hunting everybody should be dressed as a gentleman, and the most detrimental thing to fox hunting is the modern innovation (really gross laziness and an insult to the hunt and the master) of young gentlemen coming out dressed in rat catching clothes, shooting caps and fancy costumes of their own, and much harm is done.

There is nothing the farmers dislike so much as this habit, for they never know whether such persons are rough riders or gentlemen or people from the towns or who they are galloping over their land and over their fences.

There is but one proper and legitimate fox hunting dress for gentlemen, and that is red and black coat, white breeches, top boots and a high hat, and certainly thirty years ago nobody would have dared to come out dressed otherwise. Where the hounds belong to the country, landowners are entitled to wear the hunt button, but I do not think that this entitles the subscribers to wear it unless they are invited to do so by the master or by the committee, as the case may be.—The Highest Authority" in Baily's Magazine.

Wild Animals Asleep. It is always a pretty sight to come upon wild animals asleep, so graceful are their attitudes. The fox curls himself up with all the charming, luxurious air of a cat. He rests his head in the lap of the two front pads, then twines his brush neatly round over his long pointed nose. He is a light sleeper, but hares and rabbits are still more easily roused.

We believe they sleep with their eyes wide open. The uncapped lenses of the eyes remain active through sleep, so that any vision of danger impressed on the retina conveys an automatic alarm to the slumberer's brain. People are sometimes puzzled when in open fields they notice a dozen or more hare forms within a few yards of each other. They may conclude hares swarm in

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those fields. Probably the reason for the many forms is that a hare likes to face the wind when sleeping and so scratches out many forms to suit the wind's changing directions.—St. James' Gazette.

Dalton's Experiment. The English chemist Dalton was a schoolteacher. He worked without a laboratory and with crude apparatus, mostly made by himself from simple materials. Here is an example described in his own words:

"Took an ale glass of a conical figure, two and a half inches in diameter and three inches deep; filled it with water that had been standing in the room and consequently of the temperature of the air nearly; put the bulb of the thermometer to the bottom of the glass, the scale being out of the water. Then, having marked the temperature, I put the redhot tip of the poker half an inch deep in the water, holding it there steadily for half a minute, and as soon as it was withdrawn I dipped the bulb of a sensible thermometer into the water, when it rose in a few seconds to 180 degrees."

He then determined the temperature of the water at the bottom after five minutes, after twenty minutes and after an hour and found that it rose gradually from 47 to 52 degrees. This simple experiment proved that water has the power to conduct heat, which had been denied by no less an authority than Rumford.—Youth's Companion.

The Mistake He Made. He sauntered into the central police station and approached the desk sergeant. There was a careworn look on his face. He stood there a moment as if in reverie. Finally as tears coursed down his cheeks he timidly said:

"I want to give myself up." "What have you done that you should seek a felon's cell?" the sergeant asked.

"I have long been a fugitive from justice. The welfare of society demands that I should be punished."

"But what is it? What heinous offense have you committed?" "I am a bigamist—yes, a polygamist—and I don't dare think what worse. No longer must I keep it from the world. Lock me up. I am ready to do penance."

"But will you not explain?"

"Yes, if you insist. I thought I married only the daughter, but I have found, to my sorrow, that the whole family was included."—Kansas City Independent.

An Eccentric Russian Doctor. The famous Russian, the late Dr. Zaharin, was noted for his eccentric methods. When summoned to attend Czar Alexander III. in his last illness, Dr. Zaharin required the same preparation for his visit to the palace as to any of his patients' houses. That is to say, all dogs had to be kept out of the way, all clocks stopped and every door thrown wide open. He left his furs in the hall, his overcoat in the next room, his gaitches in the third, and, continuing, arrived at the bedside in ordinary indoor costume. He sat down after walking every few yards and every eight steps in going up stairs. From the patient's relatives and every one else in the house he required absolute silence until he spoke to them, when his questions had to be answered by "Yes" or "No" and nothing more.

Pepys' Kiss. For more than two centuries the body of Katherine of France, Henry V's queen, uncovered in the building of Henry VII's chapel, was one of the sideshows seen by every visitor to the abbey. Pepys, indeed, records that on Shrove Tuesday, 1669, he "had the upper part of her body in my hands and did kiss her mouth, reflecting upon it that I did kiss a queen."—P. P.'s London Weekly.

A Little Matter Among Friends. Two boys were in fighting attitude, like bantams. Another and a smaller one stood watching them, wiping his eyes, sobbing the while.

"What did yer hit him for?" said one.

"Tain't none of your business."

"Yes, it is. He's my friend."

"Well, he's my friend too."—New York Globe.

Apples For Health. A correspondent writes to ask us what he should do when his doctor pays him more visits than are necessary. We would remind our correspondent of the old saying:

An apple a day Keeps the doctor away.

But the apple must, of course, be well aimed.—Punch.

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