

# The DARK MIRROR

By  
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"The False Faces," "The Lone Wolf," Etc.  
Illustrated by **IRWIN MYERS**  
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## MYSTERY!

Now she was in his arms, and glad. His lips closed on hers. For a long breath she was a mere thing of reeling senses.

"You love me!"  
"I don't know," she murmured. "May be..."  
"Tomorrow you will marry me, and we will go away—"  
"I don't know—perhaps—yes, I will. But not tomorrow—not right away."

A rattle of shots sounded and, looking back, she saw the plain-clothes man pick forward on his knees, then fall prone. The policeman, scrambling up pistol in hand, received the balance of the clip in Red's automatic and sank slowly down upon his side. Screaming with horror, the girl fell back from the window. Red dragged her after him, still screaming like a mad-woman.

Rousing on an elbow, Priscilla Maine found herself awake, with a racing heart, a throat swollen with a strangled cry of horror and a mind through whose painted mask the reflections of a woman's screams ran like a thread of purple light. It was true, then; she was safely restored to her own intimate environment, where nothing resembled even remotely that frowsy room where murders had been done.

From which it would appear that Priscilla Maine, the fashionable young heiress, had had a particularly vivid dream, in which she had promised to be the wife of one man and had been rescued from the police by another—a red-handed gunman. But that doesn't entirely explain things, because the encounter with the police in the slums was described in detail in the evening newspapers.

And of course Priscilla hadn't been there, though a girl just like her had been in the fight. In short, in "The Dark Mirror," Louis Vance, whose fame as a writer of mystery stories is international, has told a most fascinating tale of something that resembles dual personality—but isn't. You will not be able to solve the mystery until the very end, for it almost baffled a young physician-psychologist, who was doing his best since he was in love with Priscilla and naturally didn't want to give her up to her dream lover. And you will enjoy this exceedingly lively and quite unique story.

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Street of Strange Faces.

#### I. THE DARK CORNER.

The way of the thing was ever the same: It befell without warning; or rather, the girl had never learned to take heed of signs which, seemed plain enough in retrospect, when she sat alone and puzzled her pretty head with the dark riddle of this shadow life which set her so widely apart from every girl she knew and, indeed, from all the rest of humankind.

She had a day of restlessness, whose every hour brewed its new peculiar mood, whose every mood was purposeless, with times of almost feverish gaiety, careless, fitful, fugitive, and other times when for no reason in her knowledge she caught herself sighing long fluttering sighs that shook her strangely. So might one's spirit sigh in weariness, faint with the burden of incessant strife with some great antagonist of unguessable identity.

Toward nightfall all these were soothed away into a feeling of serene poise and self-possession; and satiate with consciousness of the rich, strong wine of vitality that quickened her, she thought of life in the likeness of a wide placid river, wherein she drifted like a fearless swimmer—stream whose waters were warm, sweet and calm with a penetrating quality of delicious calm she never dreamed could be disturbed, so absolute it seemed, so permanent, so imperturbable.

Only the sighs persisted oddly, as if her spirit knew moments of inclan-

choly of which her mind knew nothing.

And insidiously the tranquil surface of that contentment was flayed by apprehensions of nameless danger, of peril latent, stealthy and implacable; as though the swimmer surmised some monstrous shape of evil skulking unseen in those opaque depths—or felt herself subtly ensnared by a current whose irresistible set was altogether toward destruction.

Now at length perceiving what was to come, panic paralyzed in her the instinct of self-preservation; though horror brimmed the cup of being, she made no effort to fight free but, as one who knows that struggling must prove vain, resigned herself and let the baneful current work its will with her. Fascination, too, was at work, deep within her a mad desire to go again that wild way she had so often gone, and once more be, and do, and see.

So it is, so it must be, with those to whom a drug has made itself a thing of Life and Death.

On ahead, like a bend in the river, waited that turning in her psychic life which she knew as the Dark Corner; while she lay passive in the grasp of that power which so obscurely had its rise in her yet was repugnant to her, being at once her Will and her Necessity. And as the Dark Corner drew momentarily more near, the transfusion which she termed the Change was effected by what may only be described as a convulsion of her very soul, after which came lassitude, a vast enervation in which all lingering traces of reluctance were obliterated.

Now she was no longer herself, but another woman than the one she knew, a strange woman clothed in her own flesh but in no other way akin to her Self of everyday, having no thought, impulse or emotion with which that Self could sympathize, save such as may be considered common to all her sex. Yet, incomprehensibly, consciousness of the old self-identity survived; and though (as she conceived it) dispossessed from its tenement, her Self continued by her body's side, observant, critical, intrigued, something amused.

In this wise rounding the Dark Corner, she passed into that place which she had named the Street of Strange Faces; and the enigma of this confusion of Self with non-Self was forgotten in the rush of exotic sensation and emotion, excitement and lawless joy, which invariably accompanied definite and final commitment to renewed pursuit of these transcendental adventures.

#### II. LEONORA.

Together with the Faces, its windows made the Street, being of many sorts, to each its own significant illumination; hard plate glass masks of saloons beaming false fellowship, mean shop fronts of ingratiating shine, windows of homely golden glow, others through whose latticed shutters filtered sinister gleams bespeaking the unspendable, others again that gave only dull reflections in begrimed panes of naphtha flames flaring luridly above pushcarts arrayed in unbroken lines along the curbs.

Through this welter of light and shadow, in the sidewalk channels, the Faces passed and repassed, lurking darkly in forbidding doorways, seeking brazenly the brightest glare, coming and going without rest, in uncouth carnival; kind and brutal, cunning and naive, wicked and innocent, swarthy, fair, unique, commonplace; faces that disgusted, faces that allured, faces that meant nothing; that were mere empty mouthing masks; faces of oriental cast; yellow and red and brown; no faces in every shade of quartering.

She knew them all: they all knew her. The sense of strangeness ebbed; with every step, with every look around, with every breath she drew, she was losing touch with her other Self which had so singularly renounced its authority and faded into impotence at the Dark Corner, but which still kept step with her, clung to her more closely than her shadow, and like a wraith of the living, watched, noted and compared while taking part in actions wholly foreign to its nature and experiencing reactions obscure to it and unintelligible.

Now the girl moved swiftly, with ease and boldness, even with a hint of arrogance; giving the Faces look for look, smile for smile, frown for frown; laughing impishly up at a tall policeman who knitted black brows over indulgent blue eyes; flinging racy retorts to the banter of a knot of men emerging from a gin-mill; chilling with glance and word the advances of those who should have known better; chaffing hucksters who bawled in her ears the tawdry virtues of their wares; pausing now and again to exchange more kindly persiflage with folk who held title to her liking; cutting an impudent figure, as confident and unabashed as a coit turned loose in home pastures.

Her sharp perceptions took in everything, not one considerable detail escaped their remark. And she liked it, she liked it all, she was curiously per-

meated to her very marrow with delight in sounds and sights and smells familiar to her senses since time beyond their earliest record.

The Street, never wide, was the narrower for its double rank of pushcarts. Between these an occasional automobile or horse-drawn vehicle went gingerly to spare the multitude of urchins, half dressed and less than half washed, of every age and almost every nationality, that swarmed upon every asphaltum, Tenement houses—their fire escapes converted into balconies lavishly draped with candid bedding and still more candid women—drew confidential heads together on high, leaving visible only a slender ribbon of cobalt sky. In between the air was sluggish, thick with unwholesome odors, and rank with many odors; an unholy alliance of garlic, fried fish, boiled cabbage and stale beer maintaining debatable ascendancy over the native aroma of a stratum of society which holds soap less necessity than luxury. And the night was tumultuous with screams of children at erude play, howls of babies wallowing in neglect, bawling of street vendors, each striving to outtell his nearest competitor, clatter of tinny phonographs, all relieved against a wholly normal undertone of incessant gossip and bickering.

The girl hugged to herself the joy of living; this was to her the breath of life; even more, it was enterprise, adventure, the very stuff of Romance. She went her way smiling, with a conscious smile bred of knowledge that she was dressed in her best, in her very newest best at that, garments of a cut and cost and quality such as the Street seldom saw.

Nevertheless, her show of nonchalance cloaked circumspection; if her looks were free and roving, they were likewise keen and watchful. Though



"You Know... I Love You—I Make No Secret of That."

the width of the Street was between them, she was well aware of two plain-clothes men who turned to stare when she had gone by and conferred together concerning her craftily, after the absurd manner of their kind, out of the corners of their mouths.

But that was a minor circumstance, more fun than reason for worry. They couldn't jug a girl for wearing good clothes, even if they didn't know where she had got them or how.

The stress of her attention was due to considerations far more weighty; and when, of a sudden, at a crossing, she descried its cause, she checked in unfeigned dismay, with startled pulses.

#### III. THE MAN MARIO.

On the far corner a tall man, simply clothed, composed of habit, stood stilted, hands clasped lightly before him in a gesture with which the girl was well acquainted, head and shoulders lifting above the crowd. Against the tawny flames of naphtha torches his profile was sharp and black, the silhouette of an ascetic, gravely fine; but none better than she knew how its austerity was belied by haunted eyes whose sincerity could wring truth from lips that moved to frame a lie.

And he was looking for her; she knew that, too.

In a flurry so real that it touched her anger, she swung aside into the by-street, a grim street that led anywhere but the way she wished to go. Yet she welcomed its sullen gloom and went swiftly, heedless of everything but the necessity of escaping, knowing in her heart she could not escape.

Her name was called in a voice of resonant timbre: "Leonora! I beg of you..." It is I, Mario!

She stopped and swung round with a specious show of surprise subsiding into indifference. Tone and manner

were discouraging; but her heart was faint.

"Oh! hello! It's you..."  
The man paused, hat in hand, his attitude one of pleading and reproach, yet informed with an ineffaceable dignity.

"You saw me, Leonora. Why did you run—from me?"  
She tossed her head. "What makes you think I did?"

"I do not think; I know. You turned up this street to avoid me. Leonora, why?"  
"If you thought that—I wanted to be left alone—why'd you follow me?"

The man lifted his hands palms up, earnest, and let them fall.  
"You know... I love you. I make no secret of that. I have told you—how many times?—a hundred? Yes—his enunciation grew more rapid—"and you are not indifferent to me. You never said so, but... I know."

"Oh, I like you all right—"  
"No; more than that; too much to wish to hurt me. Is it not so?"

"Why, I don't want to hurt you, of course. But—if you've got to know—I was in a hurry. I've got a date—and I'm late."

"And I am detaining you! Forgive me—but let me go with you a little way."

The girl shot hunted glances right and left; then, since nothing in sight promised diversion, said ungraciously: "Nobody can stop your walking with me."

"Nobody but you, Leonora. One word—"

"One word from me and you'll do exactly as you please." With a nervous laugh—"Oh, come along!"—she turned back, walking hastily, the man Mario falling in at her side. "I'd just as leave you didn't come all the way, though."

"You do not wish me to know where you go." He nodded sober confirmation of an unuttered guess. "I see..."

"You see a terrible lot!" The girl had a spasmodic irritation. "You're always seeing things. Well, what do you see now?"

"You go to meet those others"—his tone was sad—"those whom I have so often begged you—"

"Guess it's my business who my friends are."

"Certainly you give me no right to make it mine. That cannot affect the truth that such associations are unwise."

"Maybe I'm best judge of that, too."  
"Leonora; why pretend to me? Deceive yourself if you must and can—but not me, not one who loves you as I do. Do not attempt it, even. It is so useless."

With a courtesy the more gratifying because it was so novel, Mario put his hand under her arm, lightly piloting her through the human mazes of the brawling Street, which they crossed squarely and quickly left behind.

After a little while, being in the wrong, she said sulkily: "I don't see why you're always making out I'm trying to put something over on you. I never promised..."

"True. But you know what these friends of yours are, and their ways, whether they lead, their inevitable end. You know, if you persist, your fate must be as theirs."

"I guess what's good enough for my friends is good enough for me—"

"No, Leonora; you are too good for that—or I could not love you."

The man paused, and his hold on her arm drew the girl to an unwilling pause with him, midway down a dark, dead block of industrial buildings, with a windowless wall beside them and not a soul nearby to hear. The girl was distressed, more than a little humbled in her own esteem by this revelation of an affection more enduring and generous and frank than any she had ever known.

"I am not a common man," Mario was stating simple fact, innocent of conceit. "I know the world outside the one you know, and the men and women who live in it. Where I go, I look about me, and reflect on what I see. I am seldom mistaken in those who interest me. And you whom I love... I tell you, you are no more of this life than I, and you do a wrong thing, a wicked and cruel thing, when you trample down that which is good in you and might bring you to a splendid destiny."

Impressed in spite of herself, touched, and flattered, too, she looked unwearyingly at him, twisting her hands together, her tongue faltering.

"I suppose you know what you mean..."

"Tomorrow you will marry me, and we will go away—"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

#### New Ship Lines.

A report from Brazil says that new steamship lines are contemplated between Italian and Brazilian ports.

Don't let the badness of your neighbors worry you; they might do worse.

# Court Train Is Given Approval

Style Is Seen in Dressmaking Circles for First Time in Several Years.

## SASH PLAYS IMPORTANT PART

Decoration Aids in Carrying Out Very Effective Results in the More Fashionable Informal Evening Frocks.

The long court train has returned. It is seen in the best dressmaking circles for the first time in several years. The resumption of social life by the many women who were engaged in war work set the dressmakers to designing clothes of a more formal character. During the war years the patriotic woman thought only of serving her country and doing so in the most suitable dress that she could find.

Then came the period of wild extravagance that followed the signing of the armistice. In the history of fashions this will go down as a time when clothes were elaborate, with little of beauty or good taste to recommend them. It seemed that everything possible in the way of decoration or elaboration was combined in a single model.

Now, asserts a leading fashion correspondent, we see the reaction. The lines of the best clothes made today are very simple. There is elaboration, it is true, but it is a dignified elaboration. Some models are really works of art in the beauty of drapery and cleverness of design. Their very simplicity makes them appear as though any one might have made them, whereas they could have been only created by the brain and hand of an artist.

#### Bride's Dream of White Satin.

Levin features the long court train heavily embroidered. One of her most interesting models is a bride's dress of white satin having a court train richly embroidered in white. This falls from the shoulders in one continuous piece, being attached to the bodice by means of an embroidered band which crosses the front just above the décolletage. Long bishop sleeves of tulle, the lower half embroidered in white, are a feature of this dress. Embroidery also appears across the front of the bodice and on the full, supple straight skirt.

A Levin model of black satin with the embroidered court train falling from the shoulders is held in place by an embroidered band about four inches wide which passes over the shoulders and crosses the front. Panels hanging at each side of the dress are of satin shirred in at the bottom to embroidered tassels the ends of which are of black satin ribbon. The skirts of even the most dignified frocks still are short, although several of the best designers are showing skirts a trifle longer than those now actually being worn.

#### Sash Train Lends Smartness.

A surprising number of the more informal evening frocks have trains. They may be only sash ends, and this, by the way, is a favorite method of



Frock of Gray Mousseline Embroidered in White and Gold Threads.

evolving a train for a simple evening dress. Very effective are the results achieved through these sash trains.

A plain little frock of orchid pink chiffon may be made with the neckline as high as those worn on street frocks and cut in the straight-across shallow line. The waist may be low and blousing, with the skirt short and straight. Then, to make it the last word in smartness, a sash of two tones of pink, one a very bright shade, is tied about the low waistline and several inches of one of the gayly colored ends trail on the ground.

A model of this kind is as adaptable as it can be, because the sash ends may be shortened, or the sash removed altogether and any sort of

a girdle used, so that one has a simple afternoon dress which may be worn anywhere.

Train dresses of this sort are, of course, in direct opposition to the one which is decidedly formal, but it, too, has its practical side, for the band supporting the train is made separate from the dress and just slips over the shoulders.

#### Train Makes Its Own Laws.

The train, having once got back into the limelight, takes to itself many liberties. It absolutely refuses to abide by any set rules. It may even fall from the front of a dress. A frock created by one of our own American



An Interesting Frock of Black Velvet and Black Lace.

designers has a very uneven hem, the front being extremely short and the skirt falling much longer at the sides and back. There is a sash which ties in a bow directly in the front and the long ends hang to the ankles several inches below the bottom of the skirt. To accentuate the appearance of the unevenness of the hem there are side panels also longer than the skirt.

Perhaps the most popular place for a train is at one side. The wrapped-around effect with the drapery drawn across the stomach, as in this model, is very prominent in fashions. These models, slightly draped at the waistline in a free and easy manner, are quite a contrast to the tightly draped princess dress sponsored by Madeleine et Madeleine. Dresses of this sort usually fasten at the left side. This one illustrates, too, the liking for black and white in evening frocks. It is of white velvet, showing a long side panel of black velvet and black tulle. The large flat flowers are of velvet and tulle. The back of the dress is draped in the same manner as the front.

#### Black Broadcloth for Evening Wear.

Ever so many of the skirts which wrap tightly around the figure have fullness let in by means of narrow godets on one side only toward the front. They may be laid in where the skirt laps over and forms the closing.

Cherul has resorted to black broadcloth for evening dress. She embroidered it in white. One such model has a novel skirt, with one side wrapping over the long train, while the other comes from underneath the train, fitting the figure quite snugly. On the skirt are two bands of embroidery in leaf design. Long, full sleeves are of white lace. So, also are the sides and back of the bodice, the latter having an appliquéd square of the broadcloth.

Another model which is very lovely is of white brocade and black lace. It shows the corsage swathed about the bust and cut fairly low in the back. A length of the black lace outlines the square décolletage at the back. This band, about six inches at the small of the back, widens until it is at least twelve inches over the shoulders, and then it falls at the front in pointed ends. The skirt is short and of the wrapped type, and there is a black lace train attached to the waistline at the side.

#### Scarf Adds Distinctive Touch.

A most important movement in evening dresses might be termed the scarf-like movement. It appears on many models and may be described in this way: The silhouette of a straight chemise dress is changed by attaching a scarf to the hem of the skirt or to the belt of the dress. Scarfs starting at the belt line always loop at the bottom of the dress and then up, forming the bodice, swathing the shoulders and falling down one side. These scarfs are of the same material as the dress.

This season's evening dresses are much less décolleté than they have been for some time past. All of the models to-day show a rather high neck line for evening gowns.

#### Brocades for Bags.

Brocades of great brilliancy are woven by the great fabric houses, especially for bags.