

AMERICAN BEAUTY, LOVE ROMANCE IN RUINS, MADE FRENCH COUNTESS BY FAIRY GODMOTHER

Comtesse de Tocqueville Adopts Pretty Claudia Windsor Tartoue, to Replace Dead Daughter as Heiress to Historic Title and Estates Across the Ocean

GIRL ONCE MORE WILL BE MODEL FOR HUSBAND WHO IS SUING HER FOR A DIVORCE

Adoption Brings Happiness to One Apparently Buffeted by Fate—Gifted Painter Fell Victim to Her Charms at First Sight

MR. OLIVER, page Hans Christian Andersen! Tell him the story of Claudia, "Queen of Women," with its throbbing moments of sunshine and rain, of laughter and tears, of disillusion and dreams!

Ask him if the story of Claudia Windsor doesn't beggar the fascinating incredibilities of the most incredible fairy tale he ever wrote! One week ago she was a citizen of the United States, a pretty daughter of a plain Mr. and Mrs., of Portland, Ore.

Today she is the lawful child of Henrietta Isabelle Le Roy, Comtesse Clarel de Tocqueville de Rampan de Chanquetot, and heiress to the wealth of a noble French family. One year ago she lived in seclusion, broken-hearted, afraid of life, a prey to publicity, a prey to the cruelty of her own wretched memories.

Today, under the indulgent care of Comtesse de Tocqueville, there is a brave smile in her eyes, which look out upon a world newly rich for conquest, which glimpse new heights to be won, new joys to be known. Claudia's is the story of a vagrant mother-dream come true, hers is the story of her own aching dreaming heart. At moments, bright with the sunshine of happiness and hope, at moments dark with the pain of disillusionment and tears, the young life of Mrs. Claudia Windsor Tartoue—since July 27 Claudia Windsor de Rampan de Chanquetot—has been one of a thousand moods.

Found Haven of Help in Heart of Comtesse

Those to whom life has been kinder, and yet perhaps not so kind, may blame her and say the grief in her life was of her own doing. Doubtless there are some who do blame her. But there are many, of course, who do not—and chief among them the Comtesse de Tocqueville, who on July 27 in the Surrogate Court of New York City was given the right to regard Claudia in all respects as her lawful child.

"I have no child," said Comtesse de Tocqueville, the widow of Viscount Augustin Rene Clarel de Tocqueville, an officer of the Legion of Honor. "Once I had a little daughter. Her name was Marie. Had she lived she would have been the same age as Claudia. But she died in her eighteenth year. She was beautiful, my Marie. Vivacious and loving life, but she died. When I saw Claudia for the first time two years ago I was strongly attracted to her. It seemed that I was looking at my own Marie again. Later when I heard of the great tragedy of Claudia's life my heart went out to her.

"I wanted to help her, to shield her from the many bitteresses of a young life torn by an unfortunate marriage. I told her I wanted her for a daughter. And at last she came to me. And you must call her the Comtesse Claudia now."

And it is an example of the inconceivable vagaries of circumstance, that not twenty years ago, Claudia's own mother in Portland, Ore., called her "my little French Countess."

"When I was a little child, I was very beautiful," smiled Claudia, with the faint pink of modesty itself heightening the radiant beauty of her face. She was chatting in the lobby of the Ambassador Hotel, New York. "And my mother is adorable. She is still living in the West. When mother fixed my curls, or primped up a new dress she had just put on me, she used to say 'You're my little French Countess, aren't you?' And she never dreamed that I would be one."

Piquant Beauty Won Love of French Painter

They met for the first time at the Colonial Ball in the Ritz-Carlton, Miss Windsor was one of the debutantes who received the guests. She wore a Colonial costume with a powdered wig, which only went to make her seem more piquantly beautiful. The painter spied her, was struck immediately by her charm, and fell desperately in love with her. With the Continental as well as the urgency of man, he sought an introduction through the French Consul General, Gaston Liebert.

shattered by me the most perfect type of American beauty."

Within six months they were married. They lived in apparent happiness for some time, and then came a day, in November, 1920, when Mrs. Claudia Tartoue's lawyers filed in her behalf a bill of complaint against her husband, in which she charged him with cruelty. According to the statement by Tartoue's lawyers, filed in answer to the suit for separation, Claudia, accompanied by another woman, left him and their luxurious studio-home, 200 West Twenty-seventh street, late one night in November without cause.

The Comtesse de Tocqueville knows Pierre Tartoue. She had known him in France. In 1918, she was sent to New York by the French Y. M. C. A. It was then she met Claudia Windsor. Her sympathy was aroused when the suit for separation became known. She made exhaustive inquiries, according to the lawyers who arranged for the adoption of Claudia. And for the greater portion of the last two years since, the two women have been inseparable. One of the motives, said her attorney, which prompted the adoption, was the desire of Comtesse de Tocqueville to secure complete right to protect Madame Tartoue from further embarrassments.

"Imagine the grief in the heart of that child," said the Comtesse the other day, a moment or two before train time from New York to her summer retreat on Long Island. "As a very young child she had grown to expect only happiness from life. She gave all her love to Tartoue. And although she," and the mouth of the warm-hearted Frenchwoman curved to a wan sad smile, "is all compassion for him, and all magnanimity, I say he made light of her great love and broke her heart. He

shattered all her dreams. She drooped like any wilted flower might. She went about as though dead. No wonder my friendship for her burned into love. She has been the victim of blackmail and no end of lies and deceit; when what she looked for was only love and an opportunity to live her life to its fullest. I shall take her to Europe with me. I shall introduce her to the royal family of Spain; she shall meet my relatives in France as my own daughter; she shall see Italy, and visit my many friends there. Anything to make her forget the great tragedy of her life; anything that will brighten the smolder of her enthusiasm, I will do for her.

Happy Girl Is Writing Novel to Show Her Joy

"But you should see Claudia, in her bright little room at Glen Cove. She pounds so—and so—and so! at her typewriter with her two pretty little fingers. She is writing a book. Indeed!" and the pleasant-faced Comtesse beamed her admiration, the most interesting book! All about herself—

"It's my diary, Clarel means," Claudia calls her foster mother "Clarel." She smiled. "So far I can only use two fingers. But I have the cutest little typewriter. I love to watch the words grow. And I love to go out on the hill—it's a little machine and I can carry it—and work there—"

"And some times in her room she writes far into the night," interrupted the Comtesse, and grinned jocularly, "and then she smiles all the morning through. But I do not mind. It keeps her mind busy."

"That diary—you know," contributed Claudia, "is going to be published one of these fine days, and will be illustrated by a great artist. And I shall call it 'Memoirs of Claudia,' or perhaps just 'Claudia; Memoirs.'"

"When I was ever so little my mother taught me to keep a diary," continued Claudia. "She told me that it would make me good. She said that I must make up my mind that whatever I did I must write down in my diary. And I do just that. And even today when I am set on doing something I am reminded that it must go into my diary if I do it. And that very often makes me not do it, after all, because I wouldn't want anybody to see it in my diary. My mother is lovely!"

Saw Happiness Everywhere When She Was a Child

"My childhood was a happy one. And that's why I wanted all of my life to be happy. I looked for happiness. I saw happiness everywhere. I loved to be out of doors. Every day when I lived in California—it seems ages ago—I used to drive my car to the Golden Gate stables, and there I'd get my horse, and ride and ride. I was the first girl in California to learn how to fly. Silas Topherson was my instructor. He's dead now, poor dear. In the summer I used to go yachting a lot, cruise out among the Catalina Islands, with the sunshine in my face, and the warm sweet wind blowing through my hair. It was all so splendid."

"And I had such plans for my life. I was sent to a convent when I was ten years old. My mother was lovely to me. I had everything I wanted, and lots and lots of enthusiasm. I took singing lessons. My teacher was Madame Augusta Reynard. Anna Case's teacher. She said I had a rich natural voice, which she hoped would become really a great operatic voice. Oh, I had plans!"

"Then the war came, and I traveled east. I did war service in New York, and then one strangely beautiful night I met Pierre. He loved me right away. And I soon grew to love him. Oh, so much!"

Claudia hesitated for a moment, and then with one white finger lifted as a child lifts its finger when it is on the point of saying something important, yet hesitating a little about saying it, she entreated:



"Hope," one of the several noted canvases of Pierre Tartoue for which his wife was the model

"And please, don't be hard on Pierre. He loved me very much and he is heart-broken now. He is a great artist, and something of a great big child, too. His friends can so easily lead him. He does the most incredible things, just because his friends tell him to. The newspapers carried terrible stories. They hurt me and they hurt him. Everybody knows how I was blackmailed and how Pierre was the dupe of contemptible persons."

Will Act as Model for Husband Who Sued Her

"The suit for separation is still pending. And, somehow, I am not heart-broken any more. Life is becoming interesting to me again. But I don't want to hurt him. He came to see me since our separation, and I am going to sit for him again, so that he can change the mouth of his 'Madonna.' That's the picture—the famous one—he made of me, and he wants now to correct the mouth. It is going to be hung in the French room of the Metropolitan Museum soon, I believe." It's

the picture the elder Comtesse doesn't like. "It was painted when Claudia was suffering, and it holds the bitter tears of her sorrow," she says. "I like the one called 'Hope.' It is full of the promise of this new period of her life!"

Pierre during the courtship and the few happy months of marriage, painted three well-known pictures of Claudia. "The Madonna" is the best known. "Hope" and "The Madame de Pompadour" the pastel of Claudia in her white Colonial wig.

"But I was telling about when Pierre and I met," continued this young woman of many moods. "I soon grew to love him. And he became so precious to me. I saw in him an opportunity to do wonderful things. He told me many times that I was his inspiration. And I wanted to be. I wanted to be that more and more. I worked and worked for him, and we were so happy."

"We went to South America, and there I caught my wonderful butterflies. Folks tell me that my collection is the most beautiful private collection there is. Butterflies are so generously given

in color, and so graceful. I think the wing of a butterfly—"

"But never mind. There came a time when Pierre and I fell to grief. Accusations were made when the first trouble started. But now I realize that he was a victim of designing friends, who would tell him tales which he always believed."

"After we separated, and I saw my love a broken thing, something inside me broke, too. I wanted to see nobody. For the last two years I have not been in a public restaurant. I have secluded myself. I have been living with

ably Louis Mark, the Hungarian colorist. She has been the recipient of many proposals of marriage.

"Some of the men who've proposed to me, you would know, I mention the names. One proposal came from even a president of a nation. I should like to show you his letter. It was a beautiful letter."

According to her attorney, the Comtesse was before her marriage, a Mademoiselle Le Roy, member of a family of French pioneers, which held, and still holds, large estates in California. The Comtesse de Berkeley, Calif., is built on property which once was part of the Le Roy estate, and Le Roy street is one of the principal streets in the city.

Comtesse de Tocqueville was educated in England, Paris and Germany. She has traveled extensively, her trip to this country in 1918 making her twenty-fifth crossing.

The attorneys who handled the petition for adoption declared that it was necessary to investigate both parties concerned. The more or less complex legal action consumed but a fraction of the long period of investigation. The confirmation by the Surrogate, if there should be any future dissatisfaction of relatives in the adoption of the de Tocqueville wealth, prevents any litigation over charges that the Comtesse de Tocqueville was inquisitive, influenced or inveigled by her adopted daughter.

The Comtesse entertains in Paris in a luxurious home on the Rue Vite. The Chateau de Tourlaville, a splendid old mansion near Cherbourg, is her country place. Her family has the right to bury in Pietus, where Lafayette is buried. And she declares that what wealth she has and what privileges are now her daughter's also.

The career of Pierre Tartoue has not been without its interest. He and Claudia became engaged after the first Mrs. Tartoue began a suit for divorce. The first Mrs. Tartoue, who was Miss Alma Dodsworth, daughter of T. George Dodsworth, of New York, obtained her final decree in Maine in November, 1919, on the ground of cruelty and abusive treatment. It was reported at that time that Tartoue admitted he had married her on a bet.

Artist Won Bottle of Wine and Bride in Joke Bet

"Our marriage was the result of a bet," he is reported to have said. "Mrs. Tartoue does not know this, and none of her friends know it. I bet a bottle of champagne that I would marry the first young woman who entered the door of a friend's studio. Miss Dodsworth entered. She came to take a music lesson."

"I saw her only five minutes. I could not speak English very well. I had been in this country only two weeks and I was most unhappy because in three weeks I would have to go back and marry a young French girl. It was an engagement arranged between our two families. I did not love her, but the trousseau was already bought. There seemed to be no escape."

"So I had this idea of a bet. Miss Dodsworth, who afterwards became my wife, invited me to dinner with her family the next night. After dinner I announced to her family that we were engaged. I told her of my engagement to the French girl and that I wanted to break it, and she confided to me that she was engaged to a man for whom she did not care. We decided to save ourselves unhappiness by marrying each other."

It was five years after the incident reported, that suit for divorce was made. The action was not contested.

Tartoue's career as a painter has been singularly brilliant. It is said that during the period of his courtship of Claudia, he received \$30,000 for a



A painting of Claudia Tartoue by Louis Mark



Claudia, Countess of Tocqueville

"The Madonna," painted just before the Tartoues parted and for which the new Countess will pose again to permit the expression of the mouth to be changed; Claudia Windsor as the painter first saw her in ball costume

Clarel in Long Island, I have been hiding myself.

"But things are changing now. The Countess has been so good to me. I am finding life absorbing again."

Named Beautiful Bird "Love" for Her Husband

"I have ten beautiful birds—ten troupials? You've never seen a troupial? They are yellow and black, about the size of a pigeon. After I left South America the President of the Republic of Colombia sent me ten of them. I have them at a boarding school now. Her merry eyes twinkled.

One of his paintings, "The Goddess of Happiness," was sold to the du Ponts by him for a large sum. Gossip had the amount as high as \$80,000. The painting is a semi-nude figure, whose finger is touching the head of a little bronze god, fat and merry. The partially clothed female figure smiled archly out of the narrowest slit of her eyes.

"One day," explained Claudia, "I entered his studio. The eyes of the figure were closed. They were originally painted that way. But when I entered I smiled at Pierre, out of the corners of my eyes. I was standing just a little sideways, and I smiled—like this—just a little, you know. It was a very natural thing to do at the moment."

"It struck Pierre like a lightning bolt. He shouted 'Hold that pose! Please. Just a minute! I stood that way for about an hour, while he worked madly at the canvas. When I saw the picture again, it was as you see it today—the figure was smiling at me with my own eyes. Pierre said it was just what was needed to make the picture a great one.'"