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THE DRESS-MAKER'S NIECE, OR Who is She?

CONCLUDED.

THE next morning Arlington awaited the promised communication with not a little impatience, and when he received it he could not repress a slight fluttering of the heart as he opened the daintily written note. Its tenor was as follows:

"Respect for myself, as well as for the generous confidence you repose in me, impels me to explain the rather equivocal position in which I have been placed since I came here. It is proper to state, that although I am known as the niece of Mrs. Doton, she is not a relative; if she were, I know of no reason why I should disown the relationship.

"She attended my mother during her last illness, and remained in our family until it was broken up on the death of my father. During her residence with us we were accustomed to address her as 'Aunt Doton,' a habit I still retain. My visit to Campont was solely on her account. I elected to reside with her because I did not wish to go into society, preferring retirement, and because I desired as much as possible the society of one who is largely entitled to my gratitude and love. Otherwise I should have accepted the kind invitation of Mrs. Reynolds, a dear friend of my mother, and been *feeted* instead of frowned upon.

"I said that I did not wish to go into society. Indeed, I soon found, when it got noised around that I was a niece of Mrs. Doton, that 'society' was not disposed to receive me. I was very well contented to be excluded.

"At the solicitation of Mrs. Reynolds, I attended the reception of her daughter, Mrs. Perdan. On my entrance I was about speaking to a young lady whom I had met and been introduced to at Mrs. Doton's, but I at once found by her manners that I had taken an unwarrantable liberty. Her remark, which I overheard, 'dressmaker's niece,' informed me of the mistake I had made. I was not surprised at the feeling she manifested, nor did I resent it. I have seen the same unamiable spirit too often exhibited to be affected by it. On the moment a girlish freak possessed me, I determined to permit the impression to pass current that Mrs. Doton was in reality my aunt, and Mrs. Reynolds at once favored the innocent deception. It seems, however, that rumor made me not only a niece of the worthy woman, but that I was to be her future partner.

"But let me now come to what more directly interests us. Rising superior to the prejudices of 'caste,' you last night did me the honor of soliciting my hand. It was to me a proof, although I did not need it, of the sincerity of the sentiments you professed, and believe me, I duly appreciate them.

"My sole reason in withholding an answer was a desire that you should meet me in the circle in which I have been accustomed to move, before finally deciding on a matter that will vitally affect our happiness. I shall proceed from here to Philadelphia, and thence go to Newport to spend the warm season. We shall probably meet there, as you tell me that you propose visiting the latter place during the coming vacation. If on a renewal of our acquaintance your sentiments should remain unchanged, I will not conceal from you that it will afford me the highest gratification. Pray excuse this long epistle, etc."

In a few days after this letter was written Miss Deblois took her departure. Some little surprise was manifested by those who

hoped to secure her services as music teacher that she should slight so good an opportunity. But she soon passed out of mind, and her name was never mentioned, save that occasionally, Miss Trafton, Miss Canby, or some of that clique, would make sarcastic allusions to her in the presence of Arlington, who received and parried them with the greatest good-nature.

The time hung heavy on that gentleman's hands after the lady had left. He formerly had whiled away his leisure time in the law library, hunting up authorities for some case in hand, but now he had lost all relish for the call-bound volumes, and instead of spending his evenings in "Moot Court," or "Parliament," as had been his wont, he was given to solitary wanderings and musings by moonlight in the sequestered walks of Campont. Term time, however, at last closed, and with a sigh of relief Arlington packed up for a flying visit home, and then—hey, for Newport!

With the arrival of warm weather the fashionable world of Campont also took flight, some for the mountains, some for Saratoga, and some for the sea-side. Of course the Traftons and the Canbys were off with the rest.

Although the shady avenues, the quiet, rural aspect of Campont, would seem to render it the place of all others for a sojourn during the hot months, yet fashion demanded the exodus, and so 'Our Set' generally left their comfortable, cosy homes, and subjected themselves to all the annoyances and discomforts of a popular resort, leaving Bridget and Patrick in the full enjoyment of what they vainly sought.

The Traftons and the Canbys were for some time undecided where they should pitch their tents. But the young ladies having heard that Arlington intended to visit Newport, they put their heads together, and with a little skillful management turned the scales in favor of that place.

Miss Trafton, in particular, flattered herself, that with her formidable rival out of the way, she could easily accomplish certain designs she entertained against the peace, liberty and happiness of the young gentleman just mentioned.

For nearly a week Arlington had been at the famous watering-place, and not a glance had he caught, not a lip had he heard of his lady-love. Every fresh arrival was eagerly watched, but all in vain—

"She came not, ah, she came not!" He soon began to look upon Newport as an intolerable bore, and to wish himself anywhere else, away from the frivolous crowd.

One evening he was strolling with an acquaintance about the place, when, as he was passing one of the many private cottages that abound there, his attention was arrested by the voice of a lady singing. He stopped abruptly and listened. Full, mellow and bird-like, the notes swelled upon the evening air.

That voice, could he be mistaken in it? He lingered with breathless interest until the performance closed. Curiously enough it was Mendelssohn's "I would that my love," the very piece that he had selected for Miss Deblois at Mrs. Perdan's reception.

"Who lives here?" asked Arlington, eagerly, as the strain ceased.

"The Hon. Mr. —, of Philadelphia," was the name given, a gentleman known throughout the land for his eminent station and immense wealth.

"His establishment is considered the most perfect in the place," added his friend.

"And, by the way, Arlington, the divinity who presides over it, the one whose voice has cast such a spell upon you, is a niece, unsurpassingly lovely; a style of beauty that would just suit your taste. She has, besides, still more solid charms, being an heiress of fabulous wealth.

"What is the name of this paragon?" asked Arlington, in a jostling manner, seeking to conceal his interest in the answer.

"Her name is Bentley, and she would be decidedly the belle of the season, were she not averse to accepting the rather equivocal honor."

"Bentley," said Arlington, with a touch of disappointment in his tone; 'strange that I have never met with her.'

"Not at all, she lives quite retired. She rides out occasionally with her uncle, avoiding as much as possible the fashionable drives. Some will have it that she is rigidly, perhaps the better term would be frigidly, exclusive; but those who know her best aver that she is directly the reverse, being remarkably affable and not in the least upish."

All that night that voice and the strain, "I would that my love," ran in Arlington's

head, haunting, like witch music, his waking and his sleeping hours.

The next day Arlington sauntered on the beach, watching the bathers—strolled along the favorite walks scanning the promenaders—took a long drive, eagerly scrutinizing each turn-out. But vain was his quest.

"The face, the form he pined to see
Met not his ardent gaze."

It was in the height of the season; where could she be? The inquiries he had made of those who were posted in regard to the arrivals and departures, if a party by the name of Deblois was or had been there, were answered in the negative. Perhaps sickness had prevented the visit? And yet in the last letter Mrs. Reynolds had received from her, she mentioned that she was on the eve of departure for Newport. Some sudden obstacle must have arisen to prevent or postpone the trip.

Insufferably dull to the young man appeared Newport, although never before so thronged and gay. He had many acquaintances there; every night there were reunions, hops, music, etc., but they had no attractions for him, and generally he kept himself aloof from them.

He was sitting "solitary and alone," on a cliff, gazing in the offing, dotted by numerous yachts and other small craft, scarcely noticing an object in his abstraction, when his companion of the night before approached him.

"Hey, Arlington, my boy, dreaming as usual" was his salutation. "One would deem you in love, or suffering some other grievous calamity."

"It is terribly dull here; don't you find it so, Bingham?"

"Dull, man! there never was so brilliant a season. I say, old fellow you are getting in a bad way. What the deuce has come over you? You must go to the hop tonight—a very *recherche* affair in the Union, the very *creme de la creme* and the grand hop of the season. *Ecoutez!* Miss Bentley is to be there, Frank, her first appearance; the lady, you know, whose voice you were so crazy to listen to last night. Will you go?"

Arlington had a curiosity to see the lady whose voice bore such a striking resemblance to one he had remembered so well, and he did not require much urging, and it was settled that his friend should call for him.

"By the way," said his companion as the two strolled away from the spot, "there's a big swell here from New York, as rich as muck—excuse the odorous comparison, but it is so *appropos*—who has avowed his purpose of wooing and winning the peerless Bentley, the conceited puppy! He woo her! he win her! the idiot!"

"Who, or what is she?" asked Arlington, smiling at the contempt manifested by his friend.

"Some Tompkin, or pumpkin, who has made a lucky hit in Wall Street. There he goes the gilded calf!" pointing to a flash-looking young man, just then dashing by in a tawdry turn-out, resplended with gilt and varnish.

"Egad, Arlington," added Bingham, as they ascended the steps of the hotel, "imagine the imperial Bentley mated to such a thing as that?"

"But I have not seen this paragon, remember."

"No, but you will see her to-night; and all I have to say is, take care of your heart, my boy!"

It was well along in the evening when Arlington and his friend entered the brilliantly-lighted hall. There was a pause in the dances, and the two were slowly making their way through the richly-dressed throng to the upper part of the room, where there appeared to be more space.

There was a small knot of ladies and gentlemen engaged in lively conversation, who seemed to attract more than usual attention. A marked deference appeared to be shown them, the crowd refraining from intruding upon their little circle, although one of the party was subjected to a battery of eyes constantly leveled at her.

"There she is!" said Arlington's companion, "the lady in point-lace dress, whose back is towards us. She is conversing with Judge Peyton. The other gentleman is the famous Senator—she binds all to her chariot wheels!"

"She has a splendid figure!" was Arlington's admiring reply. "And if her face—By heavens, it is she!" he abruptly exclaimed, as the lady, at that moment turned her face toward them.

"She? Who?" inquired his friend, with not a little curiosity, noticing the sudden start of his companion and the flushing of his cheeks.

Oddly enough, similar manifestations of

astonishment were elicited from other lookers-on, merely from the lady's change of position.

That afternoon the Traftons and Canbys had arrived at Newport. They had come too late, or were too much fatigued, to participate in the festivities of the evening, if indeed they could have procured cards of admission.

As they could not mingle with, Miss Trafton and Miss Canby determined to be spectators of the gay assemblage. For this purpose they had stationed themselves at one of the piazza windows where, not exposed to observation themselves, they commanded a good view of the interior of the hall.

The fame of Miss Bentley's wealth, beauty, position and superior intellectual endowments had already reached their ears, and they had a very natural curiosity to see one who was the theme of much admiring comment. They were accompanied by a gentleman friend who was well "up" in all matters relating to Newport.

From their position they had a full view of the little group already mentioned, and the lady with her back towards them was pointed out as the much talked of Miss Bentley.

"What a perfect figure!" was Miss Canby's candid remark.

"What exquisite taste in her dress!" echoed Miss Trafton.

"Yes and what magnificent diamonds!" added the former, with an envious sigh.

"I wish that she would turn her head that we might get a sight of her face," rejoined Miss Trafton.

As if in obedience to the wish expressed, the lady turned full towards them.

"Miss Dobbins, as I live!"—"Miss Deblois!" were the joint breathless exclamations of the two ladies at the discovery they had made, while a blush of mortification crimsoned their cheeks, as their thoughts reverted to their treatment of the lady in Campont.

Full and ample would have been the revenge of the "dressmaker's niece," for all the slights she had suffered, could she have witnessed the chagrin of her concealed spectators.

The reader perhaps, may faintly imagine the feelings with which they gazed upon one, the "observed of all observers," whom they had in their foolish pride, looked down upon as unworthy of being received as an associate. In the pleasing indulgence of such agreeable feelings, and in the hope that their reflections may prove profitable to them, I take leave of the young ladies.

I shall not attempt to portray the emotions of Arlington when he recognized in the regal Miss Bentley the unassuming, neglected Miss Deblois. I think that he would have been better pleased had he met with her in a less exalted position. When he knew her as the niece of Mrs. Doton, he did not deem it condescension on his part to solicit her hand; but now he seemed to think that it would be condescension on her part to bestow it.

He hesitated for a moment. Should he claim her acquaintance? Should he venture to renew his suit? These questions were soon solved. When he approached her, the sudden joyful start of surprise that she gave, the quick eager extension of her hand, the tell-tale blush which mantled her cheek, the warm cordial greeting, swept away at once and forever all distrusts from Arlington's mind.

"If I might accept this kind welcome as an angry, my happiness would be complete," said Arlington, in a low voice, as he took the hand held out to him.

"If so great a boon can be secured by so simple a process, you would be very unwise not to do so!" was the significant rejoinder, as the lady returned his gentle pressure.

Thus, then and there, the compact was sealed that bound their hearts in an indissoluble union.

"Why, my dear Julia," asked Arlington, a few evenings after, as they sat in her uncle's villa talking over her visit to Campont, "did you appear there under an assumed name?"

"It was not assumed, Frank. My name is Julia Deblois Bentley. After my chattering reception, a girlish freak led me to drop my patronymic. I should have disabused your mind in regard to it, but in the hurry of my departure forgot to do so."

"It will be an endeared name to me," said Arlington, with pardonable fervor, "as associated with her who first enlisted my love."

As the conversation of affianced lovers, however interesting to the parties themselves, may not be particularly edifying to the general reader, I here close my report, except to state that neither Arlington or "the dressmaker's niece" have any reason to regret their marriage.

A Fight with a Lion—A Lion Tamer Tamed.

For some time past the Menagerie and Circus of Mr. O'Bryan, of Frankford, has been open at the corner of Main and Oxford streets, in that borough. In the menagerie there were a couple of cages containing lions: one cage having those which Mr. Joseph Whittle, the lion-tamer and performer, had succeeded in so controlling as to render them completely subject to his will. The other cage contained a lion which had not yet been entirely tamed. Mr. Whittle, however, knowing his power over dumb animals, attempted yesterday, about five o'clock, to enter the cage of this untamed or half-tamed brute, and go through his usual performances, such in fact, as he had been accustomed to perform with the animals, which had long been under his care. He had succeeded in doing all those tricks which, in comparison with the last to be performed, may be considered minor, and then proceeded to put his head in the lion's mouth. In this it is evident Mr. Whittle had misjudged the amount of control which he had obtained over the beast, by the simple remembrance of the power of his eye. The lion permitted him to seize his upper and lower jaws, the eye of his master firmly fixed upon his all the while; permitted him to open them, to strain them open, and to keep them open; but the instant M. Whittle stooped and placed his head so far between the monstrous jaws as to lose "eye mastery," that instant the ponderous hinges cracked, closed, and the teeth of the beast were imbedded deeply and firmly in Mr. Whittle's cheeks. Of course, he instantly screamed, and Mr. William Coultas, who exhibits the elephant, with great courage, and not without some risk, seized a cage-scraper, an instrument about ten feet long, and through the bars commenced laboring the lion with great vigor. This had the desired effect of causing him to relinquish his hold of Mr. Whittle's face. On this gentleman's rising, his left cheek was seen to have been terribly lacerated and his right cheek torn, from the jaw-bone down to the under lip. The blood was streaming profusely from his wounds, and pouring down his bosom and clothing. Maddened with defeat and pain, Mr. Whittle seized a short piece of wood which he had with him in the cage, and with a courage equal to that of the beast before him, boldly and fearlessly attacked him. The struggle continued for some little time, the lion evidently having been cowed by the ferocity of the man's attack, but the increasing faintness of Mr. Whittle, as well as the excitement of the lion, fed by the flow of blood, which by this time covered the bottom of the cage, filled the brute with a sudden savageness once more, and with a bound he threw himself on Mr. Whittle's breast, and bore him backward to the floor of the cage. Then turning suddenly upon him, he fixed his teeth in the fleshy part of his right thigh, which he bit through no less than four times in different places, from the knee upward, and making nine wounds, some of them three inches long, terribly lacerating the femoral vessels. Mr. Coultas had all the time continued to use the cage-scraper with such good effect as to make the beast ultimately leave Mr. Whittle and retreat to the other division of the cage, through the door usually built in the centre of these receptacles. Weakened from the great flow of blood, mangled and lacerated as he was, Mr. Whittle rose and closing the door, with the assistance of Mr. Coultas bolted it, thus effectually preventing any further attacks from the animal.

The doctor, though not saying that Mr. Whittle's wounds are necessarily fatal says it is impossible to give any opinion at present of the consequences, both the shock and loss of blood being very great.

A vacancy having occurred in a certain church by reason of the resignation of the organist, the trustees advertised for a candidate for organist, music teacher, etc. Among the numerous replies to the advertisement was the following peculiar announcement: Gentleman: I notice your advertisement for organist and music teacher, either lady or gentleman. Having been both for some years, I offer you my services.

The following is a verbatim copy of a letter recently received by a schoolmaster in Indiana from a householder in his locality: "Cur, as you are a man of no legs, I wish to intur my sun in your skull." The obscurity and seeming offensiveness of this letter disappear on translation. What was intended, to be written was: "Sir, as you are a man of knowledge, I wish to enter my son in your school."