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BY

"MRS. ALEXANDER"

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Hector, *Mrs.* Annie F., ["Mrs. Alexander," *pseud.*] At bay: a novel; [*also*] Valerie's fate. N. Y., H: Holt & Co., 1885. 2+308 p. S. (Leisure hour ser., no. 172.) cl., $1.

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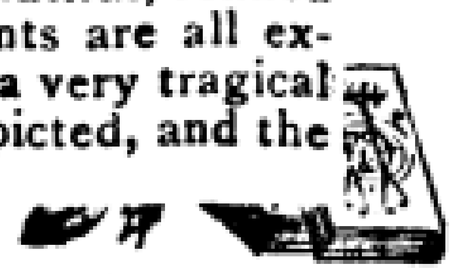

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CHAPTER I.

STRIKING THE TRAIL.

PARIS on a bright April morning. Can any city make a brighter, braver show under a clear blue sky and a brilliant sun, the chestnuts in the Champs Elysées and Tuileries gardens bursting into bloom, the flower-market of the Madeleine a mass of color, exhaling delicious perfume, the fair purchasers in the first freshness of their spring attire, the tide of business and of pleasure at the fullest flood. It is a sight to fill any heart tolerably free from pressing anxiety with an irresistible sense of youth.

Though the month was still young, the weather was warm enough to make open windows an agreeable addition to the comfort of a pretty little *salon* in the *entresol* of Meurice's hotel, where an elderly lady was seated at a table on which a dainty *déjeuner*, and a couple of bottles, inscribed respectively "Moselle "and "Pomard," were laid out.

She was not handsome, never could have been handsome; her face was broad and strong, with small twinkling black eyes, and a heavy jaw. Her figure still showed traces of the symmetry for which she had been remarkable, and the hand she had stretched out to take another oyster, was fine both in shape and color. Her rich black silk dress, the lace of her cap, the jewels on her fingers, all her surroundings indica-

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ted wealth,—her expression, comfortable self-satisfaction.

She finished her oyster with an air of enjoyment, and then looking at her watch, murmured "he is late" —as she spoke, the door was opened, and a waiter announced "M. Glynn."

The visitor was a tall, broad-shouldered man, of perhaps thirty-five or more, with very dark hair, eyes, and complexion, well dressed and easy in his bearing and movements, yet not looking quite like a club, or a drawing-room man.

"This is not your usual punctuality, Hugh," said the lady smiling benignly, as she stretched out a welcoming hand, "but you make your own punishment! Time, tide, and *vol au vents*, wait for no man."

"I have a thousand apologies to make! You may be sure the delay was unavoidable or I should not have kept you waiting."

"But I have *not* waited! Take some oysters—and then tell me what has kept you, if it is a discreet question."

"Perfectly. No oysters, thank you. Do not let me delay the routine of your *déjeuné*. Just as I was leaving the 'Bourse,' I ran against Deering of Denham, who insisted on walking almost to the door with me."

"Travers Deering? I did not know he was in Paris. Is Lady Frances with him?"

"She is, for he honored me with an invitation to dinner to-morrow, mentioning that Lady Frances would be very glad to see me. I was engaged, however; I don't find dining with Travers Deering a cheerful occupation. Though Lady Frances keeps a brave front there is a profound sadness in her eyes, or I fancy there is."

"Fancy! yes; I suspect your fancy is tolerably vivid still. Now eat your luncheon, and we will talk presently." She proceeded to press various dainties on her guest, who ate moderately.

"I don't think you care for good things as much as

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I do," said the hostess, leaning back in her chair; "I am always vexed with people who don't care what they eat; it shows deficiency of brain power. Now tell me,—have you succeeded this morning?"

"Yes," he returned with a smile, as he poured out another half-glass of Pomard; "I have disposed of all your Honduras shares, not at par, but at a trifling decrease. Here," drawing out his pocket-book, "are bills and notes to the amount of fifteen hundred pounds. I am glad you are out of the concern, you might have lost double the amount; pray avoid these foreign bubble companies in future, none of them are to be trusted, Lady Gethin,—none that offer high interest are."

"My dear Hugh, I never will do any thing without your advice again; I have had a perfect nightmare about these horrid things. I am no miser, but I hate to lose money; I am very glad you managed to get rid of these shares so soon, for I want to go back to London to-morrow; the rooms I have had altered in that old house of mine, are ready; I am dying to furnish them."

"Well, you had better post this money to your bankers, and register your letter, than carry it about with you."

"Yes, it would be the best plan. Shall you stay here much longer?"

"Some little time; I have a special mission to execute for the House, which may keep me a few weeks."

"Be sure you come and see me directly you return; and do go and see Lady Frances Deering, she would be a charming woman if she let herself go. I was always interested in her. Why can't she get on with Deering? he is good-looking, well-bred, well thought of, and not very much older than herself."

"Perhaps she does get on with him," said Glynn.

"I used not to care for Deering," replied Lady Gethin. "He had a quarrel with a cousin whom I

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liked very much, and who was killed afterward, poor fellow. I have forgotten what the quarrel was about—a woman I think, and I have an idea Travers behaved badly; but he is quite an irreproachable personage *now*, and monstrously civil to me, especially since poor dear Sir Peter bequeathed me all his real and personal property. Then, you know, we are second cousins, two or three times removed."

"Oh, indeed! Well, he is very civil to me too, and I am certainly no relation but——"

"Aha! *you* are dearer than kith or kin," interrupted Lady Gethin; "you can give him financial tips, and chances of turning, I won't say an honest penny, but simple hundreds into splendid thousands by the varied sources of information you command. Ah! were I a man, I should like to be a financier, which is 'high-falutin' for stock broker."

Glynn smiled. "I have had very few business transactions with Deering, or for him. He is wealthy enough without help from any one. By the way, he is more inflammable than I imagined; we were at the Auteuil races together the day before yesterday, and when sauntering about we were both struck by a girl who was in an open carriage with two other ladies; she was certainly pretty—more than pretty—and Deering seemed quite fascinated, he could not keep away. It was not like his usual cool, high-bred indifference to all mundane things, to go back again and again to stare at the young lady, for you know he is rather a decent fellow as men go."

"You don't say so!" cried Lady Gethin, with keen interest. "What would Lady Frances have said?"

"The last time we went to look at the bright particular star, she and her party had left their carriage," continued Glynn. "Deering then seemed to pull himself together, and to remember he was not alone; but I could see he was desperately vexed to have lost sight of her, though he tried to laugh at himself, and said she was wonderfully like some one he used to

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know. I was both surprised and amused by his maneuvers. I left him before the last race, and I rather fancy he was going to renew his search for her.'

"Ah!" said Lady Gethin; "no doubt, thereby hangs a tale."

"Perhaps so. The young lady, however, is very young—little more than seventeen or eighteen, and she certainly did not recognize him—nor even notice him."

"The wisest have their weak moments," observed Lady Gethin, with an air of wisdom. "I certainly have never heard any queer stories about Deering. Did you see any one else you knew at Auteuil?"

"A few second-rate racing men, and George Verner."

"Oh, he generally haunts the Deerings when he is not at sea." After a good deal more talk, partly business, partly wittily told scandal, Glynn rose to take leave. "I dine at the Café de Florence to-day, with Captain Methvin and Madame Gauthier; will you join us?"

"I am unfortunately already engaged; so must forego that pleasure," said Glynn.

"I shall see you then as soon as you return to London, and be sure you tell me any thing fresh about the Deerings."

"I don't fancy there will be any exciting *esclandre* in that quarter. If the weather continues as fine as it has been for the last few days, you will have a pleasant journey. Good morning, Lady Gethin."

When Glynn left the hotel he walked briskly for a few minutes toward the Louvre, then he gradually relaxed his pace, as his thoughts disengaged themselves from his surroundings, and presented him with a picture they had frequently mirrored during the last three days.

After making a few purchases at the bookstalls of the Palais Royal, he made his way down the Rue St. Honoré, finally coming to a halt at the crowded cross-

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ing opposite the Madeleine, where the contrary currents coming from the Boulevards, meet the tributary tide of the Rue Royale. He was in no hurry, it amused him to see the huge omnibuses disgorging their contents; to watch eager women with parcels, and refractory children tightly held by the hand, make ineffectual dashes at the opposite shore, and come skurrying back again, baffled, but still resolute. To observe the little flower-girls plying their trade, and hear the sharp bargaining between them and their customers.

Suddenly, however, his eyes brightened; the expression of a lazy looker-on vanished, and was replaced by one of keen, vivid interest, as his glance fell on the original of the picture which had haunted him since the day of the races at Auteuil. A slight girlish figure, in a pale gray dress; a mantlet or scarf, edged with black lace, drawn closely round her; she was crowned by a pretty little hat, also bordered with black lace, and adorned with a large bouquet of primroses and tufts of narrow black velvet ribbon. Under the hat beamed a pair of thoughtful, earnest, dark blue eyes—large and lustrous; eyes that none could pass unnoticed; long lashes; distinct, but delicate eyebrows; a clear, pale complexion; a sweet though not very small mouth, and abundant light golden-brown hair, made up a whole that might have attracted the attention of even a more "potent, grave, and reverend Signor" than Travers Deering of Denham.

This was the face and figure that had dwelt in Hugh Glynn's imagination since he had first seen them. In any case he must have noticed so fair a girl; but there was something in the effect she produced on Deering, that impressed him with a curious sense of interest and uneasiness.

He had laughed at his own condition of mind, as a silly after-glow of boyish folly, unworthy his experience and maturity. Yet there was a wonderful charm

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in the soft grace of her quiet movements, and, accustomed as he had been to women who rarely stirred out unattended, he looked round to ascertain if this delicate, refined creature had no companion, no *bonne* or chaperon. No ! she was quite alone. Three times, while he watched her, she attempted to cross the street, and three times she returned baffled. Glynn could not lose such a chance ; advancing to her side, he raised his hat and said, with grave politeness.

"There is an unusual crowd ; will you allow me to see you safely to the other side."

She raised her wonderful eyes to his with a slightly startled, but frank expression.

"Yes," she said simply, in exactly the low clear tones that might be expected from her. "I shall be very glad."

"Keep close to me," returned Glynn, and seizing a lull in the traffic, he piloted her to the pavement in front of the Madeleine.

"The reason of the strongest is always the best," she said, quoting La Fontaine aptly in his own language. "I should never have had resolution to seize that opportunity."

"I think I speak to a countrywoman," remarked Glynn.

"Yes, I consider myself English. I am very much obliged. Good morning." This decidedly, though politely.

Glynn felt himself obliged to relinquish an eagerly-formed intention of drawing her into conversation. He could not thrust himself upon a lady, and he felt strongly disposed to believe that his new acquaintance was thoroughly a lady, though a knowledge of life in most European capitals disposed him to suspend his judgment. He followed her at a little distance as she threaded her way through the booths which shelter the flower-sellers and their fragrant wares, till she reached one where she was apparently greeted as a regular customer by its wrinkled owner. Then with a certain

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degree of contempt for his own weakness he turned resolutely away, and walked down the new Boulevard Malesherbes.

He had not gone far, when his attention was attracted by a figure advancing with a somewhat slouching gait toward him, a man of scarcely middle height, but broadly and strongly built, well, though rather showily, dressed ; his trowsers tight below the knee, and loose above, his cut-away coat, bright-colored necktie, and low-crowned hat, had a horsey aspect ; a broad sunburned face, with well-trimmed, but coarse, red mustaches and hair, a blunt, resolute nose, sharp, light eyes, the lids puckered, as if from trying to look at strong sunlight, gave him an air of intense knowingness ; all these seemed somewhat familiar to Glynn, as was also a certain expression of lazy good-nature, which softened the ruggedness of his aspect.

While Glynn was struggling to answer the question with which we have all puzzled ourselves at one time or another—" Where have I seen that face ?"—its owner stopped suddenly before him, exclaiming " Mr. Glynn ! if I am not greatly mistaken ; I hope I see you well, sir."

The voice and accent, which were peculiar, neither French, nor English, nor American, though a little of all, with an undertone of something that was none of the three, brought back to Glynn, as by magic, certain passages of his life ten years before,—a big, crowded, gambling-saloon in the Far West, dim with tobacco smoke, and hot with gas-lights, reeking with the fumes of strong drink, and echoing with the din of strange oaths, suddenly rose from out the caverns of memory, a confusion of struggling figures, a hand-to-hand conflict, the man before him gallantly backing him in a desperate fight to reach the door.

" Mr. Merrick, I had no idea you were at this side of the Atlantic !"

" I have been more than once at this side of the Atlantic since we met last. You know all good Yan-

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kees hope to go to Paris not only when they die, but a considerable few times before that event. I'm right glad to meet you ; and, before going further, I beg to observe that I have assumed " (he said " ashumed ") " another name since I had the pleasure of seeing you ; or rather, I have reverted to my original patronymic which was a deuced deal too good for the raff among whom we were temporarily ingulfed, to mouth. Allow me"—with an elegant air he drew forth a note-book, and presented a card engraved, " Captain Lambert, U. S. C. 27, Rue de L'evêque." " Times have changed for the better with me, and I am now established here permanently."

" Glad to hear it, Captain Lambert," said Glynn, amused by the rencounter. Then glancing at the card, " you are no longer on active service ? "

" No, in a sense, no. Life is always more or less a battle ; but for the present the bugles sing truce, and I am enjoying well-earned rest in the society of my daughter and only child, to whom I shall be delighted to introduce an esteemed comrade, if you will allow me to say so."

" You are very good ! I shall be happy to make the young lady's acquaintance."

" And yourself, sir ? I fancy you have been looking up too, there's an air of success, of solid respectability, eh ? worthy of a churchwarden, about you ! "

" Yes, I may say I am now a sober citizen of famous London—"

" I believe you, and I am right glad to hear it. I shall yet salute you as Lord Mayor of London, ' Turn again, Whittington,' hey ? Where do you put up ? I'll call and get you to fix a day to dine with us, but for the present I must bid you good morning, for I promised to meet my daughter at the flower-market, and I never keep her waiting. Eh ! by Jove, here she is."

Struck by the sudden joyous lighting up and softening of his interlocutor's eyes, Glynn turned to see the

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cause, and found himself face to face with the beauty of Auteuil.

Seldom had he been so surprised, and it must be confessed shocked, as when he saw this charming ideal creature smile back affectionately to the rowdy-looking nomad who claimed her as his child, whom he remembered as one of an adventurous gang, ready alike with dice-box or revolver, barely ten years ago.

"I thought you had forgotten me," she said, slipping her hand through his arm.

"Forgotten you? No, faith! you must blame my friend here, if I am a trifle late. This is an old acquaintance, my dear; we have faced death together more than once, and a better, pluckier comrade no man need wish for. Mr. Glynn—Miss Lambert."

Glynn raised his hat with profound respect.

"He has already befriended *me*," she returned, gazing at him with a pretty, surprised, bewildered look in her large eyes. "I should still have been waiting to cross there at Madeleine, had he not escorted me."

Lambert gave a quick, questioning glance at his daughter's open smiling face, and then exclaimed, "I am infinitely obliged to you, sir; infinitely, begad! I tell you what, Elsie, you mustn't be out so late in the day by yourself. Why don't you take the *bonne* with you, or wait till I come in?"

"Oh, it is such waste of time waiting for a chaperon on a fine day; but we shall be too late to secure places if we delay."

"Yes, we had better be jogging. Can you dine with us to-day? And we'll have a talk over old times, and my girl will give us a song or two. Pot luck, my dear fellow, but you shan't starve."

"Many thanks, I am engaged unfortunately," returned Glynn, half-pleased, half-regretful that he had a real excuse ready.

"Well, to-morrow then, at six, sharp, and we will go and hear the new *operette* at the Comique after."

"You are very good. I shall be most happy," said

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Glynn, with an irresistible impulse as if some voice, not his own, answered for him.

"Well, good-by for the present. By the way, where do you hang out? What's your hotel? Wagram?—very good." He swept off his hat in continental style, and his daughter bestowed a bow and smile upon Glynn which conveyed to him in some occult manner the impression that it pleased her to think he was a friend of her father.

How in the name of all that was contradictory did he come to have such a daughter? From the crown of her head to her dainty shoes she looked thoroughly a gentlewoman. More distinguished than fashionable in style, and so delightfully tranquil in pose and manner. "I hate chattering, animated women," thought Glynn, with that readiness to condemn every thing different from the attraction of the moment, peculiar to the stronger and more logical sex.

It was too dreadful to think of so fair a creature, who looked the incarnation of a high-toned purity, being surrounded by a swarm of sharpers—for that Lambert, *alias* Merrick, and a dozen other names probably—could have ever settled down to sober, honest work, seemed impossible.

Glynn dived deep into the recesses of his memory, recalling all the circumstances of his former acquaintance with Merrick or Lambert, and necessarily reviewing his own life also.

He had lost his parents in boyhood, but was left well provided for, and had been carefully educated, taking a creditable degree at Oxford shortly before coming of age. Then came a spell of wandering, of high play, of rage for costly excitement, which, with a love of speculation, beggared him in a few years. This climax found him in New York, and for a considerable time he was put to strange shifts to make out a living, for he would not beg, he was too true a gentleman to stoop to dishonesty; but he was by no means ashamed to dig, or to do any work worthy an

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honorable man. During his desperate struggle with fortune he joined an exploring expedition, and found himself among queer companions in one of those wonderful improvised far-western towns, which spring up, mushroom-like, almost in a night, having spent the little money he had scraped together in his attempt to reach it, after the failure and dispersion of the prospecting party he had been induced to join.

On the road he had fallen in with Merrick, whom he found friendly, helpful, and not without gleams of good and of decency. So for a week or two they kept together. Fortune befriended Glynn at the gambling-tables, till the row occurred with which Merrick was so inseparably associated, and which arose out of Glynn's extraordinary run of luck, at which the mixed company of miners, explorers, desperadoes and ruffians took offense. Finding the place rather too hot for safety, Glynn and his new friend parted company, the former making his way to San Francisco, whence he sailed for Australia, where after various adventures he was agreeably surprised, by seeing an advertisement in the *Times*, requesting him to communicate with a well-known firm of solicitors in London. The result proved that his uncle, the late Sir Peter Gethin, had left him a handsome legacy.

The late baronet had been a partner in a great banking and money-lending house; Glynn elected to let his capital remain invested in the concern. His varied experience in speculative communities, his knowledge of modern languages, and his training generally, made him a valuable acquisition to the firm, first as an employé, and after a few years as a junior partner. He was frequently dispatched to conduct complicated transactions with foreign houses, to inquire into the validity of distant schemes, to test the practicality of proposed undertakings. He had thoroughly sown his wild oats, and had developed ambition, self-respect, self-confidence; but, unknown to himself, the spring of imaginative passion which had been the

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cause of all his misfortunes, and most of his pleasure, was only covered in, not exhausted, and lay there, ready to bubble up and well over into a strong current at the touch of the divining-rod.

Perhaps it was some hidden sympathy arising from this latent warmth that made him so great a favorite with his uncle's widow,—a shrewd, worldly, voltairean woman, well-born and well-bred,—who escaped from poverty and dependence by accepting the position of wedded nurse to the aged, gouty, city knight, Sir Peter Gethin.

It was long since Glynn had been so roused and interested, and the acquaintances on whom he called that afternoon, found him unusually animated and agreeable. All through a somewhat solemn dinner at the house of a great French banker, he was buoyed up by the prospect of the different kind of festivity which awaited him next day. There was something curiously stimulating in this encounter with his old Californian acquaintance thus swept into such incongruous surroundings by the eddying current, life's stream. How did he come to have such a daughter? What matter! enough that there would be so charming an ingredient in the morrow's pleasure. As for his own prudence, self-control, worldly wisdom—it never crossed his mind to doubt them. He would pose as a calm spectator, study the puzzle offered to his observation, and if necessary let Merrick or Lambert know the exact position of Deering should he ever cross their path.

The weather was still calm, bright, warm, when, having drawn a light paletôt over his even dress, Glynn left his hotel, preferring to walk as he was in good time for dinner. At the corner of the Rue Castiglione he met Deering, who was coming leisurely from the opposite direction; they stopped to exchange a few words, and then Deering exclaimed, looking at his watch, "I did not know it was so late; I am to do duty, and escort my wife and her sister to

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the Opera Comique to-night, *au revoir*," and they parted.

"The Opera Comique," muttered Glynn, with a strong feeling of annoyance. "He will see his Auteuil attraction, and recognize *me* in attendance. The presence of such a father, too, will dispose him to believe it's a case of fair game; but, after all, I have no right to think ill of Deering. There is a curious sort of fate about the whole affair. I am a fool to worry myself. I will try to enjoy the passing hour, and let omens and auguries alone."

On reaching his destination Glynn mounted to the third *étage*, and was admitted by a neat black-eyed *bonne*, to a dimly-lighted little vestibule, containing some oak-chairs and a small orange-tree in blossom, the perfume of which was almost overpowering.

"Enter then, monsieur," said the servant, throwing open one of several doors on either side, and Glynn found himself in a pretty pleasant *salon* and the presence of Miss Lambert; who, somewhat to his surprise, was in outdoor dress.

"My father will be here directly," she said, giving him her hand. "He has gone to fetch our friends, Madame and Mademoiselle Davilliers, for we have changed our plans; not being able to secure places at the Comique for to-night, we propose to drive through the *bois* and dine at the Café de Madrid. I hope this will be agreeable to you?"

"Any arrangement you make will be most agreeable to me!" said Glynn, indescribably relieved to find himself and her delivered from the possibilities of an encounter with Deering, and charmed with the unpretending refinement of her surroundings. The room was well but simply furnished, and innocent of the flashy finery which might have been looked for in an apartment where Lambert was master. Some small but good water-colors enlivened the walls, which were of a neutral tint; an open piano loaded with music; the stove converted into a stand for flowers; the furniture

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of carved oak and green velvet ; a small basket work-table, overflowing with bright-colored wools and silk, some fine old china on the mantle-shelf ; a vase or two on corner-brackets, formed a pleasant picture of comfort and occupation.

" You know the Café de Madrid, of course ? " said Miss Lambert, when Glynn had taken a seat, as she put her music together and closed the piano.

" Yes, I know it well ; it is a capital place to dine at."

" On such a fine evening it is delightful to be among the trees, they are quite green already, and there is a charming walk down the river. We must try and persuade Madame Davilliers and the dear father to walk ; do you mind walking after dinner ? " She sat down suddenly while she spoke and looked straight at him gravely, as if it were a question of the last importance. " Does she think me an old fogey ? " thought Glynn, and answered with a smile, " I have not yet reached that period of life when repose after eating is essential."

" No," still considering him gravely, " you are much younger than my father. When he spoke of you as a comrade I thought you must be about the same age. Is it long since you met ? "

" Quite ten years."

" That is a long time. But my father is always young—I sometimes think he is younger than I am—nothing depresses him, he is so full of resource ; and enjoys as if he were but five-and-twenty."

" Yes ; I was always struck with his remarkable readiness. Do you remember America ? "

" America ? I never was in America. I was born in Australia, but my father—— Ah ! here he is," looking out of the window as a carriage was heard to stop. She took up her gloves, which were lying beside her sunshade, and began to put them on. In another moment the door opened to admit Lambert, who came in with an expression of radiant satisfaction,

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"Glynn, my fine fellow! I am delighted to see you. Has my daughter told you we have changed our plans, and substituted a little dinner at the Madrid instead of baking ourselves at the Comique? all right, come along; Madame Davilliers and 'Toinette are waiting for us below; they have brought the cousin, young Henri Le Clerc, Elsie, and who should I stumble on just at the corner of the Rue d'Aguesseau, but Vincent, going to dine all alone by himself; so I made him jump up on the box. We'll be a nice little party; you ladies will have a cavalier apiece, and one to spare, that's myself; I am only a super now-a-days; don't forget a wrap for coming home." Elsie locked the drawer of an ornamental bureau, put the key in her pocket, and declared herself ready; and Lambert led the way down stairs. Arrived at the entrance, Glynn was duly presented to Madame and Mademoiselle Davilliers, in whom he recognized the ladies who were with Miss Lambert at Auteuil; they smiled and bowed most graciously, expressing their delight at M. Lambert's change of plans in rather shrill-toned raptures. After a little confusion it was settled that Mr. Vincent, a very elaborately got up continentalized American, with fair hair, mustaches, and complexion, and rather sleepy pale blue eyes, should escort Madame Davilliers and her daughter. While Miss Lambert, her father, Glynn, and young Le Clerc, a good-looking boy in the polytechnique uniform, should occupy another open carriage.

Glynn fancied he observed an expression of decided relief in Elsie's face as Vincent took the seat assigned him, and she gave her hand to her father, who assisted her with careful politeness to her place; it was absurd to feel pleased by so trifling an indication—yet Glynn did feel pleased.

The drive along the beautiful Champs Elysées, and the Avenue de l'Imperatrice, as the approach to the *bois* was then called, is exhilarating,—especially when seated opposite an exceedingly pretty woman, whose

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prettiness possesses a peculiar charm for your own individual taste, and with whom for some occult reason you feel in sympathy. Away past the marionette shows, and Punch and Judys, the well-kept gardens and fountains, the mansions all sheltered from the heat by their closed *jalousies ;* at the further end, round the wide sweep which encircles the Arc de Triomphe, and on past splendid equipages returning from the afternoon drive up and down Long Champs, their occupants brilliant in exquisite toilets ; on down the Empress' Avenue, soon to be rechristened under a new order of things. Glynn could not help a keen sense of amusement as he compared the present condition of the man opposite him to his former state ; and the wonder grew and grew, as to how such a girl as Miss Lambert came to be his daughter. The embryo artillery officer (such was Le Clerc's destination) chattered gayly, and was well seconded by his host, whose French, though fluent and amusing, was not distinguished by grammatical correctness, or purity of accent. His daughter said little, but that little showed she could express herself pointedly. Moreover, she looked so frankly and confidingly at Glynn that he felt as if she accepted him, stranger though he was, as an hereditary friend. He had to exercise some self-control to keep his eyes from saying too plainly how charming he thought her.

The gardens of the Château de Madrid were gay and fragrant with lilac and laburnum, mignonette, and jonquils.

Lambert who loved to do things in a princely fashion had written to secure a private room and dinner. The party was therefore received with great politeness and attention.

The young ladies betook themselves to the garden, followed by the gentlemen except Lambert, who went in-doors with madame to order the wines. They were soon summoned to table, but in the short interval, Glynn observed that Vincent made a decided attempt

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to separate Miss Lambert from her companions, an attempt which she frustrated with calm, resolute politeness, remarkable in so young a girl. The dinner was excellent, the company animated, pleased with themselves and each other, perhaps slightly noisy. Madame Davilliers talked well if she also talked a good deal. Lambert occasionally, often unconsciously, said good things, and told a story with point and humor. Vincent devoted himself to madame. Young Le Clerc to his cousin and Miss Lambert. Glynn was for some time an observant listener, more and more amused and puzzled at the incongruity of the whole affair, and gathering from the conversation that Mademoiselle Antoinette Davilliers had been Miss Lambert's dearest friend at the convent school, where they had spent nearly six years together; that the papa Davilliers held some government employment, and that Vincent was the agent for a New York commercial house. Lambert's own occupation seemed very indefinite. He talked of having been connected with the press, of having had business interviews with various artistes, of writing himself on sporting matters. The symposium was prolonged, and when it was over, Glynn, observing a piano in a corner of their dining-room, asked Miss Lambert if she remembered her father's promise, that she should sing?

"Yes," smiling. "But, it was *his* promise, not mine."

"Ah! my darlin'," cried Lambert, overhearing. "You'll not dishonor your father's draft on your musical bank!"

"No. I will sing with pleasure by-and-by, Antoinette will begin."

"And an uncommon sweet little pipe she has of her own. Mademoiselle is always gracious—and ready to give pleasure! Open the instrument, Elsie; I hope it isn't an instrument of torture."

"It might be much worse," she returned, when she had played a few chords. "Come, Antoinette," she said,

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as she began an accompaniment, and Mademoiselle Davilliers, a neat little blonde with a saucy "tip-tilted" nose, and a pretty toilet of the latest fashion, went over to the piano, and in a sweet, slightly shrill soprano proceeded to request some ideal Jeannette to look into the well, that the reflection of her blue eyes might gladden the singer. She sang with much piquant expression and was loudly applauded.

"I think I should prefer looking into the blue eyes themselves, to searching for a cold reflection," said Glynn, who had placed himself at the end of the piano, so as to see the faces of the singers.

"It would be far better," returned Miss Lambert; "realities are always best."

"Now, Elsie; we are waiting for you," cried her father. Her reply was to strike a few chords, and begin a sweet, wild, plaintive air with Italian words. Her voice was peculiarly rich and sympathetic; its lower notes were especially fine; she had been thoroughly well taught, and had besides a degree of natural expression that sent her tones right to the heart of her hearers.

"This is indeed music," said Glynn, in a low voice when she ceased. "Do you feel something of the delight you give?"

"Do I give you delight? You look as if you liked my singing,—I am glad."

"It is heaven to listen to you," he exclaimed, almost in spite of himself. "Your song is quite unknown to me."

"It is a Polish air arranged by my music-master for some Italian words. He is Italian."

"I feel as if I were unworthy to ask for another song," said Glynn, after a short pause.

"Why? I will sing as much as you like; I can always sing well for those who like my singing," and again her deft fingers strayed over the notes, till they seemed to fall of their own accord into an undulating accompaniment to which she sang a *bar-*

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carolle—brilliant, playful, but with an undertone of sadness.

"She can sing a bit, can't she?" asked Lambert, approaching with exultant looks. "Why, sir, she'd create a *fureur*, a regular *fureur;* she'd pick up gold for the asking, ay, in hatsful, if she'd go on the stage; fancy her in the 'Trovatore,' or, 'The Figlia' or 'Martha!'—give us 'The Last Rose of Summer,' my heart;—why, she'd bring down any house; and the obstinate little sinner refuses point-blank to appear on the boards, says it would kill her. Faith, it is a right royal way to keep life *in* one, and the devil out of one's pocket; by Jove, she would hold her own with the best, when she has a father that can crack a walnut at fifty paces, and wouldn't mind if it were a skull in a good cause!"

"Ah, no! the stage would be a miserable failure for me. You do not take temperament into account," said Miss Lambert, with a sigh, and then stopped the conversation by trilling out the exquisite air for which Lambert had asked.

"Now," said the singer, when she had finished, rising from her seat, "you must do what I ask, dear father; I want to walk to the river."

"It's a good step," said Lambert; "and it isn't civil to leave your company."

"But they will come with me. Will you not, Madame Davilliers? and you, Antoinette,—*you* will I am sure?" raising her eyes with a confiding glance to Glynn's.

"I shall enjoy a stroll immensely," he replied. Madame, however, preferred to remain where she was, and Vincent offered to stay and play a game of piquet with her to pass away the time.

Evening was fast closing in when they started on their ramble, and the falling dew drew out delicious odors from grass, and flowers, and shrubs, as they proceeded along the avenue which, skirting the *bois*, led to the river-side. It was longer than Miss Lam-

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bert thought, and the moon had risen before they reached the Seine. At first they had kept altogether, but gradually Glynn contrived to separate himself and Miss Lambert from the rest. "And so you had not courage enough for the stage," he said, after a short pause in their conversation.

"No; I suppose it is want of courage that holds me back—a sort of constitutional dislike to such a calling. Though I greatly admire actresses and singers, I could not be one. I love quietness, stillness, —being with a few people I like."

"Then you can not like Paris?"

"Oh, yes! I am very happy here. I enjoy music and pictures, and my father gives me every thing I can want or wish. I am a most fortunate girl, but—"

"There are 'buts' in every life," said Glynn, as she paused. He wanted her to speak on.

"There is scarcely a 'but' in mine. I was going to say that I seem to want a few months in the country every year to make life complete."

"Have you been accustomed to the country, then?"

"Yes. When we came first from Australia I was rather delicate, and I used to live with the kind woman who took care of me after my mother's death at her brother's farm in a beautiful country on the borders of Wales. It was a delightful place. Then when I was about twelve my father thought I ought to learn something, and he put me to school in the convent. I have never been in England since; still I always fancy I am English."

"And I feel as if you were; but Mr. Lambert is American?"

"Not by birth. Tell me, did you know my father very well long ago?"

"Yes; that is, we ran some risks together. Why do you ask?"

"Because you are so unlike all his other friends."

"Indeed! Am I too English?"

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"No; I can not exactly say what the difference is, but it is very great."

Somehow these few simple words elated Glynn as though they contained the highest compliment. He restrained the reply which sprang to his lips, and changed the subject by exclaiming, "There is the river; how fine it looks in the moonlight."

"Yes, there is real harmony there."

"You are right, Elsie," exclaimed her father. "It gives one the feeling of being in church when the organ is playing."

"And you and your delightful singing give me the feeling of silvery light upon a still smooth lake," said Glynn, in a low tone to his companion. "You will be forever associated in my memory with moonlight and music."

Elsie smiled a thoughtful smile.

"I am not sure that such an association of ideas is a good omen. There is something mournful and mystic in the moon."

"I could never bring any thing but good to you," whispered Glynn, who was strangely stirred by the charm of his companion, the beauty of the scene, the curious fatality which had brought him into contact with Lambert after having lost sight of him for so many years.

"*Dieu!*" cried Mademoiselle Davilliers, "I am expiring with fatigue, and I have all that long way to walk back!"

"Not at all, my dear young lady," said Lambert, with a superior air. "I made a few inquiries before we started, and told them to send on one of the carriages after us. There, I think I hear it coming."

The drive back was a fitting end to a delightful day. Glynn secured a seat next Elsie, and though neither of them spoke many words, *he* at least felt that the electric communication of unuttered sympathy was complete and sufficient.

"Thank you for a delightful day, Mr. Lambert."

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"My dear boy"—it had been "my dear sir" the day before—"it is a real pleasure to meet you. Look in on us now and again. I am sure my daughter will be delighted. Elsie! Where is she?"

"Miss Lambert is rather tired; I think she has gone in. Good night,—thanks, I have a cigar."

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CHAPTER II.

PLAYING WITH FIRE.

WHEN Glynn woke next morning to broad day, the noise of the busy street, and the consciousness of an early business appointment, last night, with its music and moonlight, seemed to him dream-like and unreal. It was all very pleasant while it lasted, but in a few days he would quit Paris, and probably never see Lambert or that wonderfully charming daughter of his again. What would be the destiny of such a woman so placed? Not happiness, he feared, if she were all she seemed. Yet how devoted that queer fish Lambert was to her. So far as he could take care of her he would; but what perceptions could *he* have of what was right and suitable for a delicate, sensitive girl!

However, Glynn had other things to think of just then, and soon hastened away to hold high council on money matters with a sharp but soft-spoken German Jew, whose oiliness had not a soothing effect on the cool, clear-sighted Englishman.

Business hours are earlier in Paris than in London. Glynn found himself on the Boulevard des Italiens, and free, while it was still early enough to pay a visit. With a vague curiosity, arising from very mixed motives, he directed his steps to the hotel where Mr. and Lady Frances Deering lodged, and found that lady at tea with her son,—a pale, delicate, deformed boy,—and a gentleman of middle height, with a frank, sunburned face, and a certain easy looseness about his well-made clothes.

"You are just in time for tea, Mr. Glynn," said

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Lady Frances, in a soft but monotonous voice. "Do you know my cousin, Captain Verner?"

Yes, the gentlemen had met before, and they exchanged a few civil words.

"Is this your first visit to Paris?" asked Glynn, kindly, as he drew his chair beside the sofa on which the boy was lying.

"Yes, the very first."

"And how do you like it?"

"Oh, so much! It is so beautiful and bright. I should like to stay here always."

"Bertie is much better and stronger since we came here, which partly accounts for his wish to stay," said his mother, with a slight sigh.

"I wish I could take you to sea, my boy," cried Captain Verner; "a cruise with me would make you all right."

Lady Frances turned her pale eyes on the speaker, and Glynn noticed that they darkened with a look of intense pain, only for an instant, while she said with her usual composure, "I have no doubt that Herbert will be quite fortified by Dr. Lemaire's treatment. Then the summer is before him, and he will have gathered strength before winter. Winter is very severe and dreary at Denham."

"You should winter at Palermo," observed Glynn. "It is a delightful spot—a sort of place to make you forget troubles."

"I wish you would," said Verner earnestly.

"Say *could*," returned Lady Frances, and she rose to ring the bell.

She was very tall and slight, exceedingly dignified and deliberate in her movements, and would have been rather handsome but for her extreme stillness, coldness, and want of color. A pale blonde sounds like insipidity, but Lady Frances was not insipid; she was a great lady to the tips of her fingers, yet simple in dress and manner to a degree that bewildered those gorgeous dames, the wives of her husband's wealthier

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constituents, on the rare occasions when they were admitted within the sacred portals of Denham Castle.

"Why are you hurrying away to London?" asked Verner. "There is nothing to call Deering back, as he has lost his seat."

"He is not happy out of club-land I suppose," said Lady Frances, sitting down beside her son. "I must say I am very sorry he lost the election. He deserved better at the hands of the Denham men, but it was the radical mining people that turned him out."

"Do you leave soon?" asked Glynn.

"On Thursday; I suppose you will not come back quite so soon? You are fond of Paris, I think?"

"My movements are rather uncertain; I may go on to Berlin."

"I wish you would come as far as Genoa with me," cried Verner. "I am just appointed to the 'Africa,' on the Mediterranean station. I hate traveling alone. Poor Dennison who commanded her died of a few days' fever off the coast of Calabria,—caught it shooting in some marshes, and—"

The entrance of Deering interrupted him.

"How do, Glynn. You still here, Verner?" He took no notice of Lady Frances or his son.

"Yes, I want to see the review to-morrow, and will start by the Lyons train at night," said Verner, in an apologetic tone.

Deering threw himself into an easy-chair, exclaiming, "It is getting insufferably hot here. Could you manage to start on Tuesday night instead of Thursday morning?"—to his wife.

"I should think so."

"Then pray make your arrangements. I say, Glynn, things look very shaky in Spain. There will be a tremendous fall in Spanish bonds."

"They will recover, if one can hold on. In fact, if a fellow can afford to wait, it would not be a bad plan to buy now," returned Glynn,

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Here Deering's valet brought his master some brandy-and-soda, with a due amount of ice, a refreshment which both Verner and Glynn declined.

Travers Deering was tall, but not so tall as Glynn, more conventionally distinguished-looking, with regular aristocratic features, steel-gray eyes, and nut-brown hair and mustaches. He was, on the whole, a popular man, and bestowed a good deal of carefully veiled cultivation on his popularity. He was considered rather the type of a proud, manly, English country gentleman of a fairly clean life, though no saint, and a little martyrized by being tied to so cold and impenetrable a wife. Servants, and insignificant people of that description, whispered that the steel-gray eyes could flash with baleful fire, and that Lady Frances had grown colder and stiller since the deformity and delicacy of her only child had become perceptible and hopeless; while Mr. Deering never staid at Denham alone with her.

Glynn was conscious of an unaccountable sense of relief when Deering expressed a desire to quit Paris, even sooner than he had at first intended.

It was absurd to imagine that any evil could arise out of a mere passing admiration, it could be nothing more, for a handsome stranger. Yet the expression of Deering's eyes, the uneasiness, wonder, fire, all commingled, which had so impressed him, flashed back vividly across his memory with undiminished disturbing force. But Deering was talking.

"I have been round Count de Latour's stables this morning. Have you seen them, Glynn? They are worth a visit. His stud-groom and head men are all English. I am very much inclined to back his chestnut, 'Bar-le-duc,' for the Derby. He's a splendid horse, only, of course, it isn't always blood or breeding that wins. There were a couple of Americans looking through the stables at the same time, who seemed deucedly wide awake, and inclined to back both 'Bar-le-duc' and a filly, 'Étoile d'Auvergne,' about which

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I am not so sure. I have met one of them, Vandervoort, in London; do you know him?"

Glynn said he thought he did. The talk became, for a few minutes, of the turf—turfy. And while it went on the boy rose, and followed by his mother, who covered his retreat, noiselessly left the room. Glynn, looking at Deering at this moment, caught an expression of malignant dislike in his eyes toward his deformed son, or his wife, or both, which surprised and revolted him. It was instantaneous, and he continued to talk lightly and pleasantly, till Glynn rose to bid Lady Frances good morning.

Verner left the room at the same time, and the two men walked toward the Place de la Concorde together.

"Pity that poor boy is a cripple," said Glynn, speaking out of his thoughts. "I fancy Deering is a good deal cut up about it."

"I don't know about Deering, nor do I care much," returned Captain Verner, bluntly; "but it has been a desperate grief to the mother. Why, when we were children together—ay, and after—Lady Frances was the life of us all. I never saw a girl with so much go in her; and now!"—he broke off expressively. "However, no one can help her," he added, after a moment; and then quickly turning the subject, began to talk of French politics, till they reached the corner of the Champs Elysées, where they paused to see the Empress drive by. There Verner turned back to keep an engagement, and Glynn strolled on slowly to his hotel, resolutely resisting a strong temptation to call and inquire for Miss Lambert. Indeed, with the help of a good deal of letter-writing and interviews with sundry personages of financial importance, Glynn contrived to keep his mind free from imaginative pictures and irresistible suggestions. *He* was not going to make a fool of himself, or of any one else, either; he was too old and experienced to be carried away by a romantic encounter, or the liquid loveliness of a pair of lustrous, dreamy, dark-blue eyes. "What eyes they are!" he

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thought, as he sat at his second *déjeuné*, on Sunday morning, three whole days since he had enjoyed the hospitality of his quondam comrade of the Californian episode. "Mere civility demands that I should call. I think I have been under fire often enough to stand this last fusillade without flinching ; besides, the whole thing is deucedly curious." So after looking in at Gaglinane's, and reading the English papers, Glynn found himself on his way to the Rue de L'Evêque.

The perfume of orange-blossoms which came forth from the opening door greeted him like the prelude of delight, so vividly did it remind him of the pleasant hours to which his first visit was an introduction.

"Yes, monsieur was at home, and mademoiselle also," and the servant, opening a different door from that through which she had ushered him on the former occasion, spoke to some one within, and immediately Lambert himself, in a gorgeous dressing-gown, a fez on his head, and a cigarette in his mouth, came forth to greet him.

"Glynn, come along into my den here. I thought you had left for some other diggings. I was going to look you up to-day. I've not had a moment I could call my own since we parted !" While he spoke he ushered his visitor into a small, very small room, containing a large knee-hole table loaded with letters, newspapers, small account-books, and all appliances for writing, and two very comfortable circular-chairs. These articles of furniture scarcely left room to move. A looking-glass, surmounted by a couple of revolvers, completed the decorations. A dim light was admitted by a long narrow stained-glass window ; and a second door, which stood open, led into a comfortably furnished dining-room.

"This is my *Cabinet de travaille*," said Lambert, wheeling round one of the chairs ; "and I am just taking an hour or two from the Sabbath to clear up some little arrears of work. Where have you been all these days ?"

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"Very busy, or I should have paid my respects to you and Miss Lambert sooner."

"To be sure, to be sure, you are in business yourself. Any thing in the book-making way? I think I remember you had a fair notion as to the value of a horse."

"No; mine is a more sober system of gambling."

"Aha! the share market! I could give you a hint or two about that new steamship company they are getting up in Hamburg."

"Thank you, my hands are pretty full already."

After a little further conversation on financial and sporting topics while Lambert was putting his papers together with some degree of rough order, he proposed to join his daughter.

"She was out to mass with her friends the Davilliers, and had breakfast with them; I have scarcely seen her this morning." So saying, he rose and led Glynn through the dining-room to an arched doorway, across which a curtain of rich dark stuff was drawn, and lifting it cried, "Are you there, my jewel? I have brought Mr. Glynn to see you."

"Come in," said a voice; and as he entered Glynn saw Miss Lambert advancing from an open window to meet him.

The room into which he had been ushered was small, though larger than the minute apartment Lambert had appropriated. It was prettily and lightly decorated, the hangings and chair covers being of chintz, bouquets of roses tied with blue ribbon on a cream ground, and had one large window opening on a balcony full of flowers, which overhung a garden belonging to a large hotel in a street behind. There were books and needle-work, a writing-table, and a sewing-machine about, and it was evidently Miss Lambert's private sitting-room. A stout, elderly woman in black, with a lace cap and a large apron, who looked more than a servant and less than a lady, rose as they entered, and was about to leave the room, when Lam-

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bert exclaimed in his hearty manner and rather peculiar French, "How goes it, Madame Weber? I hope your cold is better; a summer cold is worse than any other, for it's out of season."

Madame thanked monsieur, reported herself nearly quite well, and vanished.

"I thought you had left Paris, at least my father did," said Elsie Lambert, giving Glynn one hand, while the other held an open book—a shabby, well-thumbed book.

"I should not have left without calling to say good-by, to thank you again for your delightful songs," returned Glynn.

She smiled. "Will you sit down, or shall we go into the *salon*, this is such a tiny place?"

"Oh, we are snug enough here. And how are you, my dear? you haven't said 'good morning' to your old father yet."

"My *old* father!" leaning her head against him for an instant, with inexpressible loving grace; "why, he is younger than I am, Mr. Glynn. When I have been brooding over my book or work I always feel as if some bright, pleasant playfellow had come to rouse me when my father walks in."

"Thar!" said Lambert, looking over with infinite pride and a queer expressive nod and toss of the head to Glynn, as if to say, "What do you think of your old fighting, gaming, hand-to-mouth comrade now?" "It's not every old cuss that can find a nice young lady to say as much for him, hey?" he said aloud.

"I quite understand it," returned Glynn, smiling, his eyes full of tender admiration. What a curious puzzle the whole thing was. How had Lambert *alias* Merrick, or Merrick *alias* Lambert, found the funds to keep up this establishment, which, modest as it was, must cost six or seven hundred a-year? Honestly, he hoped, though from certain dimly remembered traits he feared the lively, boyish Lambert was not the most scrupulous of men. Still, regard for so sweet,

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so refined a daughter must, ought to keep him straight.

"What are you going to do with yourself, Elsie, this damp, drizzling afternoon? you can't go out."

"Oh yes, I can; I was just asking Madame Weber if she felt well enough to come with me to the *salon;* one can find all weathers in the pictures."

"A good idea, faith. Will you come with us, Glynn? for I'll be your escort myself, Elsie. Just let me get into my coat and boots, and I'll be with you in a twinkling."

"Yes, do come, that will be delightful. And you too, Mr. Glynn?"

"With infinite pleasure."

"Then I'll make my toilet before you'd say Jack Robinson," cried Lambert, as he left the room.

"You are fond of reading, Miss Lambert?" asked Glynn.

"Yes, very fond; and this is such a delightful English book. I like it much better than French poetry."

"May I see?"

"Certainly," handing it to him.

"Ah, 'The Lady of the Lake,' that is a very old friend; I thought modern young ladies had left such childish productions far behind."

"Childish! what can you mean? Why, it is so clear and vivid; I almost feel the mountain air as I read; and that combat between Fitz-James and Roderick, only a man could have written *that!*"

"I must read it again," said Glynn, half to himself, as he turned over the pages; "I have not seen it since I was a boy."

"Then you read too? that also is unlike my father's other friends."

"I am afraid your father's friends do not stand very high in your estimation; I earnestly hope I may find more favor."

"I think I shall like you,"—softly—gravely, and

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without a tinge of coquetry, looking at him while she spoke.

He could not have answered her lightly, even had he been inclined; there was something imposing in her straightforward simplicity, and he replied, in the same tone: "I hope you will try to like me. You have not read many English books perhaps?"

"Very few books of any kind, and those chiefly since I left school. It is a great delight, but I read very slowly; indeed I am slow about every thing, not that I enjoy the less."

"I am sure you learned music quickly."

"I can always pick up airs, and even long pieces, by ear, but I do not think I learned by note quickly."

"Tell me," asked Glynn, moved by a sudden impulse, "did you enjoy the races last Sunday at Auteuil? I should not imagine racing an amusement suited to you."

"But I *was* amused; the crowd and the brightness made a pleasant picture." Then with a sudden recollection, "But how do you know I was at the races; they were long ago, before I knew you?"

A strange thrill of triumph shivered through Glynn's veins at this implied admission that her acquaintance with him was an event to date from.

"I saw you there, and I feared you might have seen me, for I was with a man who gazed at you almost rudely, because you reminded him of some one, and I did not wish you to associate me with him in your mind."

"Was he a tall, haughty-looking man, very English, and rather *distingué*?"

"Yes."

"Then I *did* see him, but not with you; it was just before we came away. He walked up to the carriage, and looked into my face. I felt frightened. Why did he do it? Of whom did I remind him? some one he did not like, I am sure."

"That I can not tell," said Glynn thoughtfully,

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while he remembered that Deering had no doubt returned to gaze once more at the face which had so fascinated him.

"Do you know the gentleman well? Is he—good, I mean kind, or hard and cruel? He filled me with a strange fear; but I did not mention it to my father, because he is so fond, so anxious about me."

"Now then, go put on your bonnet, my darlin'; the sun is trying to come out. We'll take a *fiacre*, and have a good look at the pictures," cried Lambert, breaking in on their discourse.

Elsie was soon ready, and a few hours of simple, pure, but thorough enjoyment ensued. Lambert candidly avowing his indifference to art generally, secured a comfortable seat, and produced a couple of newspapers from his pocket. To these he devoted his attention, telling his daughter he would await her pleasure.

So Glynn was practically alone with Elsie. He found a new experience in her genuine, though uncultured appreciation of the paintings, in the complete unaffected reality of her manner, the honesty of her crude opinions. Then when she found he had seen many galleries, and knew something of art, the interest with which she listened to him was flattering and amusing; not that she was ready to accept his dictum unquestioned, she tried most assertions by the test of her own common sense.

The restful charm of her gentle composure, while it enchanted her companion conveyed an impression of latent strength which unconsciously piqued him into an irresistible desire to exert an influence, a disturbing influence over her. He was growing conscious that at the first sign of discomposure, the first fluttering hesitation in her look or voice, his firmness, prudence, good resolutions would go by the board. For the present, however, all was safe; he might as well enjoy himself, in another week he would probably be far away, and might never see his queer Californian

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comrade or his lovely daughter again. Never? Well, he was not so sure about that. Meantime the severest chaperon could not find cause to cavil at any of his words or looks; he was calmly agreeable, and put forth his best powers of conversation, his memories of art, of other lands, of all that could lay hold of his companion's imagination, with intuitive skill.

"Have I kept you too long, dear father?" exclaimed Elsie, when at last she sought her much enduring parent and sank into a seat beside him.

"Well, you've been a trifle longer traveling around than greased lightning. I've finished my two journals, and had a doze, but you have enjoyed the pictures, eh?"

"Very, very much; Mr. Glynn knows a great deal about painting, and he has explained many things that puzzled me. I never enjoyed the *salon* so much before. Will you come with us again, Mr. Glynn?"

"I shall be very glad," he returned with laudable sobriety. "But I fear I shall have to leave Paris in about ten days," he added.

"Then pray let us come one day next week," said Elsie, quite unmoved by this announcement.

"All right, *ma belle*," returned her father; "but we must be going now, it's six o'clock, and I asked Vincent to dine; we have a little business to talk over."

Elsie was silent, but a distressed look crept over her speaking face. "If you want to talk of business, may I not go to dine with Antoinette?"

"Aha! you perverse little puss, you are real unkind to poor Vincent, who is a good fellow enough; why, every one likes him but you."

"And I do *not* like him, nor do I like to sing to him."

"See that now! and he an old friend of your father's before—no, not quite before you were born. Well, please yourself, dear, please—Why," interrupting himself, "there's old Monsieur Chauvot; I must speak to him."

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He went forward and was soon in deep conversation with a stout Frenchman, through whose arm he passed his own, and they walked on together, Elsie and Glynn following.

"So Vincent is one of your father's friends who do *not* find favor in your eyes. What has he done?" asked Glynn.

"Nothing; I can not account for my dislike, but it is here," pressing her hand on her heart, "and will not go away."

"And I with as little reason share it," returned Glynn.

"Do you? I am glad, which is very wrong, but it comforts me to find some one else unreasonable. Madame Davilliers and Antoinette think him quite nice and agreeable."

At the door of Madame Davilliers' residence Elsie paused. "I may as well go in now," she said to Lambert. "Will you not come in and say a little word to madame? and you too, Mr. Glynn, she will be delighted to see you."

Glynn assented. After a quarter of an hour's lively talk amid a circle of evidently solid and respectable visitors he was cordially requested to call again, and left the house with Lambert, feeling that another link had been added to the magic chain which was twining itself round him.

"She's an elegant woman, faith," said Lambert with the air of a connoisseur, as he left the house with Glynn, "and so is the demoiselle. I always count it real good luck that Elsie fell in with them, for between you and me and the post, none of my acquaintances were just suited to introduce a young lady into society. It's been uphill work *I* can tell you, but Madame D. has been no end of a help to me. Why, you'd never have the faintest notion of all the whim-whams she has put me up to! Wouldn't you think now a girl would be all right in her father's house with a respectable young woman like Celestine to wait on her? Not

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a bit of it. Madame says I must have a sort of a lady to be a companion to Elsie, and so she found Madame Weber for us. Now they are going to marry Antoinette to a very respectable wealthy young vicomte that will be another backer for Elsie. I believe preliminaries are nearly arranged, and then he'll be presented as a *prétendant.*"

"What a hideous system it is," ejaculated Glynn.

"I don't see that at all," returned Lambert; "a good girl will get fond of any man who makes her a kind husband, and God only knows the relief it is to a parent to make sure that all's right, and see too one's girl safe under the protection of a strong man." He spoke with feeling.

"There are some better aspects, I confess, to the *mariage de convenance,*" said Glynn, "but the worse outweigh them."

"Well, I am inclined for the system, though our American girls would never stand it."

"Are you American?" asked Glynn, encouraged by his companion's confidential, regretful tone to put the question.

"A naturalized American. I was obliged by the persecutions of a cruel government to quit my native land as a mere boy, and leave behind me the life of a gentleman, for I can tell you, sir, the Lamberts of Ballybough are as good a stock as any in Ireland; that's five-and-thirty years ago; between you and me I have had a hard, sometimes a desperate fight of it since, but I keep all that to myself. Madame D. there thinks me a big man entirely; it's all the better for *her*, and all I care for is my jewel Elsie."

This brought them to Lambert's door. "Honor bright," said he, giving his hand to Glynn, "I know I may trust *you.*"

Glynn shook hands cordially, and went toward his hotel, musing on the curious contradictions displayed by his former friend, and the incongruity of being made a confidant by the adoring father of the girl

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against whose subtle charm he had determined to steel himself.

* * * * * *

A fortnight had gone by swiftly, too swiftly, and Glynn was still in Paris. True, the plans which would have compelled his presence in Berlin were changed, and he was consequently detained a little longer in the French capital, but he was now free, and had some weeks at his own disposal.

For various plausible reasons he was frequently at the Rue de L'Evêque, and also a welcome visitor at Madame Davilliers', who declared him worthy of being a Frenchman. He was always careful to bestow his whole attention on her when in her presence, and did not shock her sense of propriety by throwing away any small politenesses on the young ladies.

His happiest moments, however, were those in which he found Elsie sitting at her work or at the piano with Madame Weber and her knitting established beside her. Then they talked long and confidentially on many topics, sometimes in French to include the good Alsacian, but more often in English ; and Elsie would practice her songs while he sat in a deep low chair and dreamed, and was lapped into a state of feverish uneasy delight. Every day the difficulty of tearing himself away grew greater, and still the quiet unconsciousness of Elsie, the easy friendly tone which she preserved toward him convinced him that whatever of pain might result from their intercourse would be unshared by her.

Glynn was often Lambert's guest ; and more than once entertained the father and daughter at some one of the pleasant restaurants, in the *bois*, or on the Champs Elysées.

Lambert, though speaking frankly enough of himself, never explained very distinctly what his employment was ; nor did he make any allusion to the position or occupation of his former friend and comrade, as he was fond of calling Glynn.

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"I have a wonderful piece of news for you, Mr. Glynn," said Elsie one fine warm afternoon, when he had been ushered through the orange-scented vestibule to the *salon* where she was sitting beside her work-table, with a book Glynn had lent her in her hands, and she motioned toward a chair opposite her.

"Indeed! what may it be? Good morning, Madame Weber," bowing. "May I try to divine it, Miss Lambert? Has Mr. Lambert agreed to take you to the Pyrenees or to England?" looking into her eyes. "No! then he will go for a month or two to Switzerland? No? Then your old friend Mrs. ——, I forget the name, who used to take care of you, is coming to Paris? No? Then I am at the end of my conjectures. You see I always read '*no*' in your eyes."

"You could never guess! My father has gone away to Havre, quite early this morning, and will not return for three or four days. He has never left me since we came to live here, till now, and I can not tell you how strange and restless and half frightened I feel; but Madame Davilliers has kindly asked me to stay with her, and I go there to dinner to-day; I should have gone sooner, but I thought you might call, so I waited."

Her perfect, easy candor was charming, yet mortifying to his *amour propre*.

"Thank you very much; I am glad to have an opportunity of hearing of your intended movements from yourself; it would have been an awful shock to have found every one gone; but," looking keenly at her, "what have you been doing or suffering? You are pale. There is a weary look in your eyes."

"And you are like my dear father, too ready to think I must be suffering, or unhappy, or something dreadful, if I look a shade paler than usual. I am quite well." She smiled, stopped abruptly, let her eyes droop, while the color rose softly in her cheek, and her smile was replaced by a serious, almost sad expression in the curves of her mouth.

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"You have something to tell me? something that disturbs you. Speak, you may trust me."

"I am sure I can. Well, I was foolishly frightened yesterday. We, Madame Weber and I, had gone to hear the band play in the Tuileries Gardens. It was very pleasant under the trees, and we sat a long time. Just as we rose to return home, two gentlemen came up from a side walk; one I recognized at a little distance to be Mr. Vincent; the other, when they came nearer, I saw was the same man whom I noticed at Auteuil; you know who I mean? He looked at me so strangely, I felt uneasy, frightened, and I hurried Madame Weber away. They must have taken some shorter path, for when we reached the gate opposite the Rue de la Paix they came upon us again. Mr. Vincent raised his hat, and so did the other, and stared at me with such an odd piercing look of dislike and doubt—Oh! I can not forget it."

"Yes," said Madame Weber, gathering from Elsie's expression, and the words "Tuileries Gardens," that she was relating the events of yesterday, "that gentleman there was not at all polite; he glared at mademoiselle, *Mon Dieu!* like a savage beast; nevertheless he was distinguished, and no doubt noble."

"I think you must be mistaken," said Glynn; "the man whom you saw at the races left Paris nearly three weeks ago. I should most probably have seen him had he returned. You must have been mistaken."

Elsie shook her head. "I could never be mistaken in that man," she said.

Glynn was greatly struck by the reappearance of Deering, but he threw off the impression. It was probably an illusion on the part of Elsie. That Deering, the proudest of men, should be walking with so doubtful a personage as Vincent seemed almost incredible. He would make inquiries however. Meantime he addressed himself to soothe Elsie's evident uneasiness.

"After all, granting you are right, what have you to

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fear? Your admirer can only look; he dare not annoy you, or any attempt at annoyance could soon be put a stop to. Indeed, I am sure Deering is too much a gentleman and a man of the world to outrage good manners in any way."

"What is his name?"

"Deering of Denham; rather a personage in Yorkshire. I know him and his wife."

"He is married?" as if a little surprised. "Yes, I dare say I am foolish to be afraid of any thing, but I am sometimes such a coward. I suppose it is the effect of the terrible terror I suffered when almost a baby."

"Indeed!" said Glynn, his curiosity profoundly stirred, and feeling more than ever convinced there was some very unusual story attached to the sweet graceful daughter of his former rowdy acquaintance. "I suppose I ought not to ask you how and where you encountered such a shock?"

"I do not mind speaking of it to you; it is a sort of relief, for I have seen you look surprised when I have started and shuddered at trifles. I do not wish you to think me silly."

"Silly!—do you know that you seem to me the impersonation of tranquil, womanly wisdom?"

A laugh so merry and spontaneous rippled over lip and cheek, and flashed from her eyes, that for an instant Glynn feared he had erred by appearing to exaggerate.

"That you should think so ignorant a girl as I am wise, is too funny," she exclaimed.

"Wisdom is a gift that may be improved, not created by learning," said Glynn; "but as you permit me to ask, what was the terror to which you allude?"

"It was so long ago that my memory of it is mere confusion. When I was three or four years old the blacks came and burned our house, away in Australia; they killed some people too. Then I remember being on a horse and clinging to my father. I think I was quite out of my mind, for I remember being afraid of

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my own dear father, and thinking him changed and different from what he used to be. Oh, it is all so confused! Then there was a long voyage and great quiet; yet I used to scream if I were left alone for a moment. Sometimes it seems true that I had two long sea voyages, and that my only comfort was to crouch in my father's arms. Then came a long period—long and peaceful—in the sweet fresh country, where I grew strong and fearless, though I always had panics. I had one the first time I met that gentleman's eyes, and sometimes I feel afraid with Mr. Vincent. I was very happy with Mrs. Kellett; she is the good friend who took care of me till my father put me in the convent. He used to come and see me from time to time, and when I saw how much he loved me I grew to love him with my whole heart. That is all I know about my own life."

"And it is enough. You must banish all sense of fear—life promises to be fair and smooth for you."

"I hope so; but curious thrills of terror steal through me sometimes. I never like to ask my father about that dreadful night. I think my poor mother died then, and he can not bear to speak of it. It was that fright I suppose that made me a little slow and dull; but thank God I can and do enjoy a great deal."

"It would be a frightful injustice if you could not; and you must throw your fears to the winds. You are formed to win friends; dream only of happiness and affection! May I wait, and escort you to Madame Davilliers'?"

This request was prompted by a strange inexpressible reluctance to leave her alone in her own apartment during her father's absence.

"I am turning driveler," he thought; "am I on the verge of making a fool of myself? Not with my eyes open,—yet I would risk a good deal to insure this fair delicate creature from shock or real danger,—for with such a father, such dubious surroundings, her future is, to say the least, unpromising."

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"Oh yes; I should be very glad if you will come with us, and then you will come and see Madame Davilliers while I am with her? My father will be home on Monday, in the evening. How delightful it will be to have him back again. Ah! he is so good to me. I am sometimes oppressed to think how dearly he loves me. I suppose it is because I was so weak, so nearly imbecile when a child. Shall we go to Madame Davilliers' now? I am quite ready."

"When you like; but first do me a great favor, sing me a song before you go away among a set of strangers, a song all to myself."

Elsie smiled, and turning to the piano at once, complied, choosing a Latin hymn expressive of faith in Divine protection, one of those she was accustomed to sing in her convent school days.

When Glynn had escorted her and Madame Weber to the Davilliers' residence, he walked to the hotel where Mr. and Lady Frances Deering were in the habit of staying, and inquired if Mr. Deering had returned. "No," the waiter said, "nor did they expect monsieur, who had left more than a fortnight ago."

"She must have been mistaken," mused Glynn, as he went on to his own quarters. "Deering could not endure the companionship of such a man as Vincent, and what object could he have in following a girl like Elsie Lambert? She is a sensitive, timid soul, more so than I imagined, yet there are possibilities of heroism in her. A most delightful companion, with fresh discoveries of sheltered nooks and mossy dells of character at every step of our acquaintance. I will not leave Paris until I see her safe under her father's wing again; then, if I have an ounce of common sense left, I will fly!"

Reaching his own room, he found among others a letter from Lady Gethin, asking the real reason of his prolonged stay in Paris. Having a spare half-hour he replied at once:

"I am trying to put the pieces of a puzzle together;

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I am not sure I shall succeed, but am going to give myself a few days longer, then I shall come and report proceedings. I wonder what solution you will suggest. Till we meet then, I can say no more on the subject. Have you seen the Deerings? Are they both in London? I assure you I long to bring my doubts and suspicions to the test of your experience and acumen.

"Ever your devoted Nephew,

"HUGH GLYNN."

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CHAPTER III.

MADAME DAVILLIERS' was a very pleasant household. Of course it had not the ease and freedom that reigns in an English home, at least for young people. Antoinette and her friend were treated with the kind of affectionate indulgence suited to infants of tender years, but watched also and guarded with the care due to creatures of the same immature age.

To Lambert and his daughter madame extended a wide indulgence,—"Americans, you know," in an explanatory tone, was always her comment on any eccentricity of theirs. She was exceedingly anxious to settle Elsie judiciously, as she felt convinced she would have a goodly dower, and deeply regretted that she had not a son old enough to demand the charming mademoiselle in marriage. Lambert, however, showed himself reluctant to accept any of her suggestions, and she therefore concluded that he had other plans in view.

Elsie Lambert was very happy with Antoinette. They practiced duets together, and traced patterns, and Elsie read aloud to her friend when she was at work, or repeated to her the stories and poems she had lately read in English, on Glynn's recommendation. Elsie was the master spirit of the two, though Antoinette was by far the braver and more self-possessed in society.

But amid her contentment Elsie was conscious of an extraordinary want—a void which nothing sufficed to fill; it was the want of those quiet conversations with Glynn, each of which awoke new ideas, new aspirations,

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new life. He called as he had promised, and was received most graciously by Madame Davilliers in her *salon*. Both girls were present. Glynn, however, knew well he must not speak more than a few civil words to them, and even his inquiries for Lambert he felt bound to utter in French. But Elsie's expressive eyes told him much. They said frankly and innocently, "I wish I could talk to you. I wish I dare speak as usual. This is all rather tiresome." And he longed unutterably to take her out for a long ramble in the *bois*, her arm through his own, her sweet candid face uplifted to his, that she might the better comprehend the meaning of his words; but he must not think of such things. He ought to be thankful, especially thankful, that her feelings toward him were so calm and friendly. If he were to read any thing of tenderness, of passion, in those lovely blue eyes of hers, why chaos would be come again! For to call Lambert father-in-law would be chaotic!

"How is M. Vincent?" asked Madame Davilliers, as Glynn rose to take leave one afternoon; "he has not presented himself lately. He is a most interesting man, and quite French in his knowledge of life and character! I shall beg him to give himself the trouble of dining with us on Wednesday next, and I hope that you too, monsieur, will do us the pleasure of joining our little party. Wednesday is the anniversary of our wedding-day, and M. Davilliers proposes to make a little fête in its honor. If fine we shall dine at the 'Grande Cascade' at six o'clock; we hope our good friend Monsieur Lambert will return in time for our *réunion*."

"It is also the anniversary of Lodi, and the Grand Cascade will be illuminated," cried Antoinette. "It will be superb."

"Yes, do come, it will be charming," said Elsie.

"I need no persuasion," replied Glynn. "I shall be but too happy to join your party, madame."

During the days which intervened, Glynn kept a

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sharp lookout wherever he went, both for Deering and Vincent, but in vain, he saw no trace of either. The weather was variable, and Glynn offered up earnest prayers for sunshine and blue skies on the eagerly anticipated Wednesday. There were opportunities for a *tête-à-tête* in the freedom of a restaurant dinner which were not to be found within the narrow limits of a private dwelling.

The fates were propitious. Wednesday broke bright and warm, and most of the party were assembled when Glynn drove up to the restaurant of the Grande Cascade. Madame Davilliers was richly attired in crimson and black brocade, with white plumes in her bonnet; her daughter, in diaphanous dove-color and pink; while Miss Lambert, who was unusually animated, looked lovely in soft, clear white Indian muslin, over spring-like green, with abundance of delicate lace, and a poetic little bonnet, decorated with violets, which showed the wavy richness of her golden-brown hair.

She was listening, with an amused smile, to some remarks of Monsieur Davilliers, a good-humored looking, and rather ponderous man, with a morsel of red ribbon in his button-hole.

Glynn was warmly greeted by all, including Vincent, who, to his (Glynn's) annoyance, was among the guests, magnificently got up in the height of fashion, with a heavy emerald ring fastening his necktie, a brilliant diamond on one little finger, an onyx signet-ring on the other, and a massive gold pencil-case and bunch of charms dangling from his guard-chain.

"Is it not unfortunate?" said Elsie, in a low tone, when Glynn succeeded in getting near her; "my father can not return till to-morrow."

"Yes, it is too bad that *he* can not come, and that Vincent *can*."

"Do not look so angry," she returned with a smile. "I am sorry too, and yet I don't know why; he is always very polite and obliging, and seems to be great friends with my father."

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"There are instincts—" began Glynn; but dinner was announced, and he was directed to escort a brilliant dame, who made a determined attack upon him, and would not share his attention with any one.

Vincent was placed next Miss Lambert, and appeared to succeed in entertaining her. Altogether Glynn felt provoked, and by no means amused, as he had anticipated.

When dinner was over, Vincent proposed that they should take their coffee in the veranda, which was only raised a step above the gardens in front of the restaurant, and from whence they could see the spray of the waterfall glittering in the light of the setting sun. This was readily agreed to, and in the movement which ensued, Glynn contrived to place himself near Elsie.

"What an interminable dinner!" he exclaimed.

"Yet you had a very agreeable neighbor?"

"If a forty-horse power of talk constitutes agreeability, I had. I hope your father will return to-morrow. It seems such an age since I heard you sing."

"But I sang to you on Sunday."

"To me? no, to a crowd of strangers, of whom I was one."

"*I* do not consider you a stranger."

"Thank you; you are infinitely good to say so," gazing into her eyes. "It is a great additional charm to hear you in your own room, with only your father and myself for audience. Do you think me selfish for saying so?"

"No; yet music is music, wherever you hear it."

"*Your* music is something different from all other," began Glynn, scarcely able to keep back the imprudent expressions which rushed to his lips, so delighted was he to have a few words aside with her.

"I hope you will not go away until my father returns," said Elsie, not seeming to heed his compliment; "he would be sorry to miss you."

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"I shall certainly not leave until he returns," said Glynn, feeling himself in some odd way bound to watch over Elsie in Lambert's absence. "Don't you think he will come to-morrow?"

"Mr. Vincent seems to think it probable he may be delayed."

"Indeed! Vincent appeared to have a good deal to say for himself at dinner."

"Yes; he seems to be looking for some one," for Vincent had gone to the edge of the veranda, and was surveying the various groups standing or walking about the little lawn in front of the *café*. Presently he bowed and smiled, saying to Madame Davilliers:

"I see an English friend of mine, apparently alone; have I your permission to present him to you? He is a man of fashion and distinction—a Mr. Travers."

"But certainly," cried Madame Davilliers, "any friend of yours, dear sir—"

Vincent stepped forward, while Glynn felt a thrill of angry anticipation. In a few minutes he returned accompanied by—Deering! Vincent at once presented him to Madame Davilliers, who put on her most elegant manner to receive so distinguished an addition to her party; and Elsie's eyes sought Glynn, saying as distinctly as eyes could say, "You see I was right."

Madame's elegancies were thrown away upon Deering. He understood but little French, and only bowed with a sort of haughty courtesy to his smiling hostess.

"Ah, Glynn, you here?" he exclaimed, turning from her to his compatriot. "I fancied you were at Berlin."

"And *I* imagined *you* preparing for the next general election, which is not far off, I suspect," returned Glynn. "I hope you left Lady Frances and your boy quite well."

"They are all right," returned Deering, shortly, and even as he spoke his eyes were riveted on Miss Lam-

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bert with a strange, watchful gaze, at once admiring and hostile. The color slowly rose in her cheek, and she looked away in evident embarrassment, while Glynn felt an almost irresistible impulse to take him by the neck and throw him out of the circle into which he had intruded. But civilization compelled them to exchange polite sentences instead of following their natural tendency—to fly at each other's throats.

"Pray introduce me to your English friends," said Deering to Vincent, with a certain air of condescension.

"The only English-speaking member of our party, besides Mr. Glynn, is this young lady, and I claim her as American. Miss Lambert, allow me to present Mr. Travers Deering to you."

Glynn noticed that he used both names this time. Was the omission of one of them at first intentional?

"You must take pity on me, and allow me to sit beside you," said Deering, in a carefully softened tone; "for, unfortunately, I can not speak French, and feel awkward when I am alongside one of our lively neighbors."

He drew a chair by her as he spoke, laying aside his hat and taking his place with the easy, well-bred decision of a man perfectly sure of himself, of his social standing, and his general acceptability. Elsie gazed at him as if fascinated, and Glynn could not help thinking how handsome and lordly and thoroughbred he looked, just the style of man to captivate a girl's imagination

"Do you know, Miss Lambert, I have some very humble apologies to offer you for my involuntary rudeness. I can only urge, that when I saw you at the races, I was so struck by your remarkable likeness to a very charming woman I knew long ago, that I really could not keep my eyes in order."

"You did not offend me," said Elsie, with a quick little sigh, and making a slight unconscious movement, as if to draw nearer Glynn. "I am glad I reminded you of some one you liked."

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"I did not say I *liked* her, though she *was* charming," returned Deering, with a searching glance and a somewhat cynical smile.

Elsie did not reply. She looked wonderingly at him out of her great serious blue eyes, as if at some curious, dangerous creature.

"So I am to consider myself pardoned?" resumed Deering.

"I have nothing to forgive." Then turning to Glynn, she asked, "Do you think the fireworks will soon begin?"

"Not until it is considerably darker. I suppose we ought to go out to see them; we shall only have a very narrow view here."

"Yes, we can't possibly stay in this corner," exclaimed Deering, looking around impatiently.

"Oh, I fancy madame will make a move," said Vincent, who was hovering about in his character of sponsor to his aristocratic friend.

"I did not know you had so distinguished a circle of French acquaintances," resumed Deering, addressing Glynn, and glancing with slighty elevated eyebrows toward Madame Davilliers and her friends. The glance caught that lady's attention, and induced her to turn the fire of her conversation upon him. To which Deering replied, with the assistance of Miss Lambert and Glynn. On her own account Elsie said very little, and seemed to have lost the brightness that animated her before and during dinner.

At length the first rocket rushed toward the sky, and burst into a cluster of many-colored stars, whereupon every one jumped up and made for the garden, the lawn, the roadway.

"Pray take my arm," said Glynn to Elsie the moment he saw the stampede beginning. "It may not be easy to keep together in the crowd."

"That is not fair, Glynn," said Deering with a smile. "You appropriate the only lady who can speak English, and condemn me to silence for the next hour."

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"I am very sorry," said Glynn coolly; "but in Captain Lambert's absence I consider myself in some degree responsible for his daughter."

"Antoinette speaks a little English," said Elsie, "and will be charmed to talk to you—I mean Mademoiselle Davilliers," looking toward her.

"Pray do not trouble yourself," returned Deering hastily, "I can exist for half an hour in an unattached condition; besides, one can always pick up the crumbs which fall from rich men's tables." This with an insolent laugh, which grated on Glynn, as did Deering's whole tone; it conveyed the idea that he was among people whom he did not respect sufficiently to feel any restraint, and, moreover, that he was in a bad temper.

Elsie did not require a second invitation. Glynn was amused and touched by the readiness with which she took and almost clung to his arm as they sallied forth and mixed with the crowd. Deering, true to his avowed intention of "picking up the crumbs," kept persistently on her right—her unguarded side—and mastering his ill-humor, talked lightly and easily, every now and then planting a query as to her past life, the drift of which Glynn thought he perceived.

"Is it North or South America which has the honor of claiming you, Miss Lambert?"

"Neither; I have never been in America, I was born in Australia."

"Australia! so much for preconceived ideas. I was disposed to swear that you were English born and bred."

"I have been more in England than any where else."

"Indeed! whereabouts, may I ask."

"Look! what a splendid effect!" exclaimed Glynn, who was not too pleased at this acquaintance.

"Oh, how lovely!" exclaimed Elsie, her attention quite diverted. A large star of silvery light had suddenly appeared over the waterfall, through the spray

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of which it shone in varied prismatic colors, and Vincent coming up at the moment to speak to Deering, Glynn managed dextrously to lose himself and his companion in the crowd, and for a delicious half hour had her all to himself.

"It is nearly over," he said at last. "Let us make our way to the *café;* we were all to assemble there; you are tired, I am sure, and I am afraid Deering has bored you."

"I never know what being bored means exactly. I did not like speaking to him at first, but he can make himself very pleasant, and he looks well. How did he come to know Mr. Vincent? really Mr. Vincent scarcely seems fit to be his servant."

"That is rather strong," said Glynn, laughing, yet with a sense of annoyance at her words; "but his acquaintance with Vincent does seem inexplicable. I wonder if he would ask him to Denham and introduce him to his wife, Lady Frances?"

"Is Mr. Deering's wife a great lady?"

"Yes, thoroughbred, and I suspect with a thoroughbred's power of endurance."

"Is she not happy, then?"

"Elsie, my child," cried Madame Davilliers close beside them, "we are going to return home. You must go in the carriage with monsieur, Henri Le Clerc, and Madame Dubois; they await you in the veranda. Antoinette is speaking English quite well, but exceedingly well, to M. Dérin. He is really most distinguished. He ought to learn French."

"I am afraid he is a little too old, madame," said Glynn.

They were soon at the rendezvous; the carriages were ready, and Glynn having wrapped Elsie's cloak around her, was obliged to let Deering hand her into the carriage, as he had stationed himself at the door.

"Good-night, Miss Lambert; I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you soon again;"—with a little

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ring of triumph in his tone, and she was whirled away into the soft darkness of the summer night.

"Are you going straight back to your hotel?" said Vincent to Deering, when Madame Davilliers had driven off.

"Yes; I shall return with Mr. Glynn, if he will allow me," courteously to the latter, then abruptly to Vincent, "but I shall expect you to-morrow at 10.30 or eleven. I want to hear more about this wonderful colt."

"Very well; I will wish you good-evening.—Oh, by the way, Madame Davilliers' address is 14, Rue de C——, in case you think of honoring her Friday evenings."

"Thank you; good-evening." Then to Glynn, "shall we stroll toward the lakes? It is such a fine night, and we shall find a *fiacre* nearer town."

The two men walked on in silence for a few minutes, and then Deering exclaimed, "One is prepared to pay for tips in racing matters, but not quite so high a price as associating with such men implies; that is an awful cad."

"He is; I was infinitely surprised when I saw you appear in the character of his *protégé* this evening. How did you come to know him?"

Deering laughed. "How did *you*?—but I forgot, he is evidently a popular member of your society. I—I met him in Count Latour's stables, and found he was well up in sporting, or rather turf, matters. There is very little *sport* in them. He told me a thing or two, and may be of use."

"I did not know you were going in for racing," said Glynn.

"I take a certain interest in it, and I thought you did." He paused, lighted a cigar, and then said abruptly, "Vincent tells me you know Miss Lambert's father; in fact, that you are frequently his favored guest. How does it happen that such a girl can be the outcome of a society of bourgeois and sharpers? You must pre-

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sent me to this father when he appears; I should prefer your sponsorship to Vincent's."

"Why do you want to know a set of people so completely out of your line?"

"I have a motive, not a very high one, I confess, but sufficiently powerful—curiosity. I want to find out something about Miss Lambert's people and history, for I am certain I knew a relative of hers, many years ago."

"Well, you had better fall back on your sporting acquaintance for an introduction; he is much more intimate with Captain Lambert than I am."

"Ha! you refuse to be responsible for me? that's deuced shabby! So he calls himself captain? He is rather a queer fish, isn't he?"

"That depends on our respective ideas touching queer fish. He is not a highly-polished, courtly gentleman, but he is not a bad fellow; and he is devoted to his daughter."

"Indeed! Well, Glynn, I believe you have seen a good deal of the world, and it is pleasant to find that so much faith in your fellow-creatures survives the experience."

"Faith is certainly a more agreeable sensation than doubt," returned Glynn, unmoved. "By the way, I quite forgot I had an engagement this evening. I am late already; there is a *fiacre*." He hailed it. "Will you drive with me, Deering?"

"No, thank you; I shall enjoy my weed and a stroll, so good night. I'll look you up to-morrow or next day."

"Curiosity," murmured Glynn, as he rolled away toward Paris. "Is it only curiosity? I wonder who Elsie's mother was? It seems too bad that any unholy mystery should hang round so sweet and frank a creature;" and recalling the beautiful eyes which had looked up into his with clear unconsciousness and unhesitating trust Glynn closed his own, and gave himself up to some delightful though disquieting reflections.

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"What infernal bad luck!" thought Deering, as he lighted his cigar viciously. "I did not dream of meeting that fellow. I never reckoned on such an obstacle. However, cost what it may, I'll get to the bottom of her parentage and history. If my suspicions are right, I must get rid of her or bind her to me indissolubly; and the last would be the pleasanter process. There is a wonderful charm about her, and yet at times I can catch traces of *him* too! I wonder who this father of hers is? I must get at him. I wish I hadn't been obliged to send that cad Vincent to the right-about so shortly, just to keep up appearances. It is double distilled bad luck to have that fellow Glynn here. But if he thinks he is going to make all the running with Miss Lambert, he is considerably mistaken. She is lovely, so lovely that I almost forgive her for existing."

Glynn waited impatiently for the moment when he could present himself at Madame Davilliers' weekly reception. The reasons why he must remain in Paris multiplied. He could not leave Elsie until her father returned, and then he must stay until he got some clew to Deering's schemes. That there was mischief brewing he felt convinced. Indeed, he was inclined to believe that Deering did not intend giving his real name when Vincent introduced him to Madame Davilliers and her friends, but perceiving Glynn he had probably changed his intentions, and telegraphed accordingly to his associate. Still, considering that Deering bore a fair character, it was highly improbable he would be guilty of any overt baseness.

On reaching Madame Davilliers' Glynn found about half-a-dozen intimates already assembled. Monsieur's *partie* at whist had been made up in a small side-room, and in the *salon* Mademoiselle Antoinette and Elsie, assisted by the singing-master, were performing a trio. Glynn waited till this was over to make his bow to the lady of the house, enjoying from the corner where he

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had stationed himself an uninterrupted view of Elsie's face, which had the rapt, far-away look it always wore when she was singing. How sweet and noble her expression was. No, he would not leave her, unless he felt sure she was safe and her father forewarned. The trio ended, young Le Clerc pressed forward with animated thanks. Then Elsie looked round, as if seeking some one; when her eyes met Glynn's a bright happy smile sparkled over her countenance, and she made a movement as if to go to him. He was soon at her side.

"You have some pleasant news, I am sure?" he said, as he took her hand.

"I have indeed. My father has returned; he will be here presently, and he looks so well. He is so refreshed by the sight of the sea that he says he will take me to Brittany, when it grows too hot in Paris."

"You will enjoy Brittany," said Glynn's voice mechanically, while the real man was thinking what a heaven it would be were he alone with her in Brittany, or Buenos Ayres, or Botany Bay, or any other spot on earth, provided they were together, away from every one else. The next instant he was reproaching himself for his weakness, his folly.

"I believe the scenery is very fine," Elsie was beginning, when she was interrupted by the words, "Good evening, Miss Lambert." Glynn had been so absorbed in her that he had not observed the approach of Deering, until he spoke. Elsie turned to him, still composed and smiling, without any trace of the nervous dread which she had evinced at their first meeting.

"I am in a strange land here," said Deering, when they had exchanged greetings, "so I claim your protection; you must be my guide, philosopher, and friend." He drew a chair forward as he spoke, and Elsie sat down. "Are you a frequent attendant of these *soirées*, Glynn?" he asked, after having bestowed a nod on his countryman. "You are certainly fonder of innocent amusements here than in London!"

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"It appears that Paris produces the same effect upon us both," returned Glynn coolly.

"Monsieur Glynn," said Madame Davilliers, sailing up, "will you come and speak to my old friend M. Le Colonel Dubois? He is a most interesting person! He fought at Waterloo in the first year of his service, and is all the fonder of your nation because they were gallant foes."

So Glynn was carried off, to his great annoyance, just as Deering took a seat beside Elsie, and seemed to settle himself for a long talk.

M. Le Colonel Dubois did not find the most attentive listener in Glynn, and was not sorry when the host came to pay his compliments to the octogenarian, and permitted his English guest to escape. Glynn strolled into the next room, and found Miss Lambert still conversing with Deering, with an air of interest too that surprised him. He did not attempt to interrupt them, but stood watching an opportunity of begging Madame Davilliers to ask Miss Lambert for another song. From his position near the *portières* between the two rooms he could see the door leading to the vestibule. While he looked it opened, and Lambert came in—Lambert in a gorgeous-colored waistcoat and a bright necktie, for evening dress was not indispensable at Madame Davilliers' receptions. There was a joyous twinkle in his eye, an irrepressible air of success in his bearing. He saluted madame with much warmth, and then looked round the room as if seeking his "Jewel." Suddenly an extraordinary change passed over his face. The laughing, joyous, humorous look vanished, and was replaced by a fierce, startled, angry glare, like a wild creature suddenly roused to apprehension and defiance, as if, through the thin, smooth coating of lately acquired domesticity the savage nature of the untamed desperado had broken forth all the more vehemently for its temporary slumber. Glynn saw that his eyes were fixed on Deering, who was smiling and bending forward as he

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spoke to Elsie. She did not heed him, for she had caught sight of her father, and Deering, struck by her expression, turned to see what had attracted her. Then his face changed too, his jaw closed with a look of rigid determination, his steel-blue eyes lighted up with a flash of angry recognition. By an involuntary impulse Glynn started forward to greet Lambert with a vague intention to assist him in recovering his self-control—to aid Elsie's father in any way he could.

"Glynn," said Lambert, gripping his hand hard, "who—who is that man—sitting there—by my—daughter?"

"He is Deering of Denham. Do you object to him?"

"No, why should I? Only I knew a Deering once—not a clean potato by any means! This may not be the same—Ah, Elsie, my child! Come here, keep by me."

"What is the matter, dear? You are not like yourself," she exclaimed, as she came up and passed her arm through his.

"Not like myself! you are wrong there." Then with a sort of effort he went straight up to Deering and said audibly in English, "We have met before, sir, have we not?"

Deering, who was considerably the taller, looked down on him from the ineffable heights of his social superiority, and replied deliberately,

"I have certainly had the pleasure of your acquaintance some years ago."

Then they stood silent, eye to eye—silent, yet exchanging deadly defiance. Deering, the more self-possessed of the two, was the first to speak.

"I fancy we have seen some changes since we met. Paris is not a bad place to anchor in after a wandering life, especially when one has so charming a companion as—Miss Lambert," adding the name after a slight pause.

"How do you know my daughter?" abruptly.

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