

# The Diplomat's Love Story

by Janet Bruce

This Is Not Fiction Narration—It Is the Fact Recital of as Romantic a Courtship as Washington Ever Witnessed. Its Figures Are the Russian Ambassador and the Socially Eminent American Beauty He Courted and Won in Spite of Stern Parental Bans, Aided and Abetted by the Locked Gates of Fashionable Lafayette Square.



The Baron Bakhmetieff, the Russian Ambassador at Washington.

ALL the world that ever loves a lover—the fashionable world being meant more particularly in this case—smiles pleasantly whenever the names of the Russian Ambassador and the Baroness Bakhmetieff are mentioned.

The fashionable world of Washington smiles with especial appreciation, as it was there that the romance of these two began, and in spite of stern parental opposition pursued its way to successful issue.

It is delightful to every one, in these times of a multiplicity of infelicitous international marriages, to come across one that was a genuine love match to begin with, and which has successfully stood the test of the wear and tear of daily life for over a quarter of a century.

Lafayette Square—that Garden of Eden for so many pretty little love episodes between members of the Diplomatic Corps and the society girls of Washington—was the charmed spot wherein not only the greater part of Baron Bakhmetieff's romance ran its course, but where it took on those indelibly dramatic features that finally brought matters to a crisis and made the secret engagement blossom instantaneously into a full-blown public announcement.

Lafayette Square, somewhat over a quarter of a century since, was by no means the freely-open-to-the-public place that it is today. True, then as

present Ambassador a beardless, peniless attaché of the Russian Legation.

Miss Emily Beale, the lovely young daughter of General and Mrs. Edward Beale, had just made her formal bow to society in her parents' home, the famous old Decatur mansion, on the northwest corner of Lafayette Square. The story ran then, that it was a case of love at first sight for the fair Emily and the stripling diplomat.

Of course, society saw it instantly and smiled indulgently, and of course society watched the progress of the affair with keenest interest, for all knew that some day the lovely debutante would be an heiress whose fortune would be named in six figures. It was never dreamed in those days that the Beale money rolling up and up was eventually to mean a fortune in seven figures to each of the three children of General and Mrs. Beale.

Parents Raise Objections. And of course society smiling indulgently at the delightful little romance, fell to chatting and surmising and conjecturing as to its ultimate outcome. It followed naturally that after a time General and Mrs. Beale, who for long had been parentally blind to the romance blossoming out in their very sight, began to have their eyes opened. And they began to make strenuous objections to the match.

It was not that they personally disliked young Bakhmetieff. On the contrary, they liked him exceedingly. It was simply that they had quite different views for their daughter's future. Of all things, they disliked most the idea of a foreign marriage.

An American man of means and standing was the ideal son-in-law whom they had pictured. Russia seemed a tremendously long way off in those days, and the youthful diplomat's honors were with an ordinary idea of comfort or its availability as a prolonged sitting place.

One by one the other strollers about the Garden of Eden disappeared. Every twirling bird that on their entrance had been actively voicing its good-night plaudits, had long since bowed its head in slumber. High and ever higher rose the crescent moon, casting its brilliant lights across the shadows. Unmindful of all such things, the couple sat softly talking of the multitudes of things that had filled the minds of each since their meeting the day before.

Watchman Looks Gates. From the steeple of St. Matthew's far down the street the clock chimed sounded musically upon the air, and if they heard or heeded its sweetness, neither gave any thought to its significance.

Fleet footed, the hours stole by, until, finally rousing himself from his reverie, the watchman shook sleep from his eyelids and, lustily

That discovery, which it takes no young couple long to make—the realization that there are other places to meet than the home drawing-room when that has been closed—came to this couple. The Garden of Eden lay, after all, where they elected to locate it. In this case it was but a step or so across that outer threshold not, as over the way where was Lafayette Square railed in by the dismantled slim-barreled guns of 1812 fame.

In the Garden of Eden. The winter season was happily past and the delicious long Spring twilights lent their attractiveness to this Garden of Eden, where every flowering tree and shrub was in its perfection. Neither locks nor bolts were thought by the parents who by to keep their lovely daughter within doors. Probably under no circumstances would they have resorted to such stern measures, but as it was, they deluded themselves that the fancy of the young people for each other was only a pretty bubble that had broken and scattered to the four winds of forgetfulness.

Nevertheless, after the manner of the fashionable world generally, the daughter's comings and goings were looked after and directed by the parents. All of which mattered not, for the sequel proved, when one soft Spring evening the debutante, under the pretext of visiting some friend and attending with her a smart function, left the house at dusk.

She had not gone far before the figure of the young diplomat advanced along the street to meet her. The Garden of Eden was closed at hand. They entered and strolled about, finally sitting down to rest upon one of the park benches.

The fact that it was of the old-fashioned hideously uncomfortable, grillwork, cast-iron kind deterred them not. They were happily oblivious of its incompatibility with any ordinary idea of comfort or its availability as a prolonged sitting place.

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yawning, went from gate to gate looking, peering, barring each for the night.

The hands of the city clock pointed to 11; the mystic hour or this mighty performance of the custodian of the Garden of Eden. Yet still the couple, deep in their engrossing talk, sat unheeding upon their grillwork bench, not even remotely dreaming of the predicament in which a few moments later they found themselves when they began to say their good-nights and essayed to leave the garden.

Then to their utter consternation they discovered that the high massive iron gates, nearest them were locked and bolted as if to repel a foreign invasion. For an instant their hearts stood still. Then quick of thought and quick of foot they scrambled to each of the three other gates in turn, only to find each as securely locked as the first.

To call for outside assistance would have been to invite tomorrow's gibes and laughter of all society. It would bring down upon them likewise the wrath of two devoted parents, now peacefully slumbering at the Decatur mansion across the way.

To attempt to escape by the Pennsylvania avenue side of the park was simply to court the attention and comment of the general public. Sealing leaders and daring feats of love have failed in the past, and the young man, knowing that in accordance with international law no rude hands of an American policeman could be laid upon him.

But alas! When the yawning watchman, supposing the garden to be quite empty, had emerged from his napping in the tool-house, he had locked it ere he hid himself off for the night.

Feat in Wall Sealing. If there was no regulation ladder then one must be contrived, and as the one makeshift possible lay in the figure of the young diplomat himself, he grasped his companion by the hand and he ran with her to the middle gateway on the H street side, through which they had entered. This seemed to be the most inconspicuous place for his daring rescue.

Hurriedly breathing a few instructions, he climbed to the top of the gate with the cat-like agility of the trained acrobat. Up and over and down on the far side he went like a flash to turn his back gallantly upon his companion and bid her begin her mount from the inside.

It was easier said than done, as he discovered when, after an anxious wait, he realized that she was in too great a hurry to even to attempt the feat. Turning then, he remounted the iron fence and wedging himself securely across the top, he swung down toward her, grasping her trembling hands, and essayed to pull her up beside him.

Slowly, laborously, with infinite trembling and muffled screams of terror, she began, and after many halts and indecisions, the fair one was finally pulled to the top of the gateway.



The Baroness Bakhmetieff, who was Miss Emily Beale.

from which vantage point of comparative safety she must now begin the equally perilous descent. To facilitate this her escort vaulted to the pavement and turning his back once more with arms upstretched he bade her be of good heart and courage.

Alack and alas for the best laid plans! They were no longer alone. The always objectionable third party, who suddenly appeared as if shot up from the ground, took the form of a burly policeman. With a firm grip upon the diplomat's collar, he swung him around giving him the while a vigorous shaking as he demanded in a brogue several inches thick, what the whole affair meant anyway.

"Hands off! Hands off! You cannot arrest me! I am a member of the Diplomatic Corps!" excitedly cried the young man, knowing that in accordance with international law no rude hands of an American policeman could be laid upon him.

Pretty Chimes to Romance. Unfortunately Erin's son, not having received even a rudimentary education in the law, merely laughed uproariously and took a firmer grip of the young man's coat collar.

"Jump! Jump! And run as fast as you can," breathed the prisoner. "Jump! Hurry! If this fellow keeps on abouting there'll be a crowd here in another minute. Jump!"

And jump she did, fortunately landing full upon both feet. Then she sped homeward with the speed of a frightened deer and around to a side door, where, in response to her tapping, a faithful maid instantly let her in to safety.

To protest further to the now infuriated policeman was as futile as the endeavor to elude or wriggle free of that death grip upon his coat collar. Therefore, giving in finally, with the best grace possible, to the inevitable, the young diplomat marched to the lock-up.

Once there, a mounted messenger was speedily prevailed upon to bear a note to the Russian Minister, briefly stating that his presence was immediately required by his vastly perturbed attaché. The most profuse apologies filled the station house air at sight of the Russian Minister, and in the midst of these the two departed in the legation coupe.

Of course, no one ever knew, nor probably ever will know just how the story got out. But get out it did, the very next day, and in such a broadcast manner that there was nothing left for the obtuse parents to do but give in and pronounce their blessing, as they immediately made a public announcement of the engagement of their daughter to young Bakhmetieff.

And after the fashion of the most delightful ancient fairy tale, "they married and were happy ever after."

## Ten Minutes With The Family Men.

SOME OF THE QUIPS AND JESTS FROM PENS OF THE NEWSPAPER HUMORISTS.

### Terse Tales From Humorous Pens

#### ROCKEFELLER AND HIS ROCKS.

Just because John D. Rockefeller has made more money than he can count without the aid of 19 clerks and 46 adding machines, not to mention a well-trained corps of coupon-clippers, there are many people who come forward these days with stories to show that John, now famous for his wealth, wits and wit, was once about the cutest person that ever happened when it came to financial strategy.

According to this latest narrative, Rockefeller told a close friend—and that "close" goes both ways—one morning that he wanted to borrow \$5000 and that he must have it in order to save his business. The friend went down town in the course of his work and pretty soon met a big banker.

"I wish," said the banker, "if you see Mr. Rockefeller this afternoon you would tell him that I have found a place to put that \$5000 which he asked me to loan out for him."

The friend gasped like a goldfish, and proceeded on his way, encountering another of the town's leading bankers.

"By the way," said the banker, "when you see Rockefeller this afternoon please tell him that I have found a man who wants to borrow that \$5000."

friend, and, naturally, the other gróuch was a bit of the benedict.

"It is true that he is henpecked," asked the second gróuch.

"I wouldn't say just that," grimly responded the first gróuch, "but I tell you that incident in their household that came within my observation. The very first morning I spent with them, our old friend answered the letter carrier's whistle. As he returned to us in the breakfast-room he carried a letter in his hand. Turning to his wife he said:

"A letter for me, dear. May I open it?"—Lippincott's.

STRIDING AHEAD. There was a thin and nervous woman who could not sleep. She visited her physician and he said:

"Oh, no, doctor," the patient replied. "Well, said the physician, 'just keep a glass of milk and some biscuit beside you, and every night the last thing you do, make a light meal.'"

"But, doctor," cried the lady, "you told me on no account to eat anything before going to bed."

"Well, well," smiled Rockefeller, "that's fine! I suppose I may safely assume that my credit is established in this town. I'll just step out and borrow that \$5000 I need."—Popular.

### Quips and Flings

Governess—Tommy, what is the future of I diagnose?  
Physician's Child—"I operate." Miss Brown.—Life.

Scroggs—Didn't his teacher always say he was a budding genius?  
Borgee, an old-time nothing but a blooming artist.—Satire.

Knicker—So Jones has a great invention?  
Rocker—Yes; an umbrella handle that retains the fingerprints.—New York Sun.

She—I shall never marry a man who can't play polo.  
"Very well, I'll learn to ride. But suppose I break my neck?"  
She—Oh, there always are survivors.—Judge.

Wife—How imprudent you are! You've only just finished dinner and now you propose to bathe.  
Husband—That's all right, my dear. I ate nothing but fish.—Pele Male.

"Well, Major, I notice that you're rumm' for office again?"  
"No, sir; it's the same old rum. I got started years ago, and to save my life I can't stop myself.—Atlanta Constitution.

Guest (timorously, on being presented with exorbitant bill)—Don't you think this is just the—er—least bit exorbitant?  
Landlord (blandly)—Oh, yes; just the least bit, not very much.—Puck.

"Do you have any trouble in keeping your boys on the farm?"  
"No," replied Farmer Corntossel. "They're willin' to stay. The only difficulty is that they all want to act like Summer boarders."—Washington Star.

### Among the Poets of the Daily Press

FATHER'S RETICENCE. Father doesn't always answer when I'm anxious to know. When I asked him just this morning why no peaches ever grow On the apple tree, he told me, "Cause it's nature's way." Then I, Feeling not the least bit wiser, asked the simple question, "Why?" Father took his hat and muttered: "Guess it's time for me to go." Wonder why he never answers when I want the most to know.

Once I asked him how the oak roots that were all mixed up with beech Picked out just the sap for oak leaves—each the rightful stuff for each From the self-same soil and moisture, never making a mistake. Father turned to mother, saying: "How my poor old head does ache!" Mother told me, "Please be quiet; don't disturb your father so!" Now, why doesn't father answer when I'm anxious to know?

Yesterday down at our garden we were pulling up some weeds And were wondering why no sprouts came from the dwarf nasturtium seeds. Then I said: "Say, father, tell me why the things that are the best Are so hard to start to grow when this sorrel and the rest Grow so avidly, if they're even just a tiny root or so?" Father only sighed in silence, though I'm anxious still to know. —Chicago News.

MID-SUMMER SONG. When the binder sings in the fields of grain Is a pleasant season, too, I find. Grov so avidly, if they're even just a tiny root or so." Father only sighed in silence, though I'm anxious still to know. —Chicago News.

Splitstraw (tragically)—So you tell me to go. And yet I have been your slave. Murlet (severely)—And isn't it only right to free a slave?—Satire.

"I hope you are not bringing up your children to worship money, Hawkins," said Dubbleigh. "No, indeed," sighed Hawkins. "Why, Dubb, my children despise money so much that the minute a dollar comes their way they get rid of it as fast as they can."—Harper's.

### THE ONLY WAY.

Is just as brilliantly aflame, And the chances are, by every sign, The boys are very much the same.

We, too, are as the grain that grows— A season springing from the ground, And going down in martial rows And the singing binder comes around. And life, too, like the world, is fair, And in its beauty ever sweet Left for the obtuse parents to do but give in and pronounce their blessing, as they immediately made a public announcement of the engagement of their daughter to young Bakhmetieff.

And after the fashion of the most delightful ancient fairy tale, "they married and were happy ever after."

Oh, Fashion's a terrible tyrant, She issues her changeable decrees, And although we protest we don't like it, Still we all of us drop on our knees. We worship her while we're protesting, And her whimsical rulers we obey, Till the question all others transcending Is: What's the most stylish today? —Somerville Journal.

THE ONLY WAY. If he comes to borrow ten, I am out. Tell him, office boy, again, I am out. It's the only way to win, Or to save my hard-earned tin, For if he should find me in, I am out. —Lippincott's.

From the New York Sun. Knicker—Did you explain baseball to your girl?  
Bocker—Yes she said she understood all about diamonds