

THE NEW ISABELLA

By MARGARET LEE.

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During the remainder of Monday, all Tuesday and Wednesday morning Miss Barclay carried this letter in her pocket and read it at short intervals. Meantime no message came from Jasper, but Mrs. Barclay gained strength hourly. The straw was becoming a rope. Late on Wednesday afternoon Miss Barclay took refuge in the library, locked the door and sat down to wrestle with herself for the last time. A knock interrupted the mental argument, and she opened the door to perceive Mr. Howe standing behind the servant. Surprise kept her silent until they were alone, and glancing at him she saw that he looked more animated and had a touch of color in his cheeks.

"You seem astonished," he said abruptly. "Your brother has been here." "You knew he was coming." "Oh, yes. Have you kept a good heart?" "I am afraid not. I did not suppose that you were acting for Mr. Messenger. Jasper knows that Mr. Messenger assisted him to visit us."

"And was he not kind in so doing? I thought Mrs. Barclay's recovery might result from seeing her husband. I am mystified. What was the outcome of last Saturday's interview between you and the president? You hoped so much from it." Miss Barclay flushed painfully. Mr. Howe regarded her intently. "Nothing definite was decided upon." She spoke with an effort, and her eyes drooped under his steady gaze.

"But he had some message from the directors?" "Nothing pleasant." "Miss Barclay, you are suffering intensely. Forgive me for what may seem unwarrantable curiosity. The truth is that, even if acting for Mr. Messenger, I am anxious to be of service to your brother. Unless you are perfectly candid with me I cannot act to the full extent of my powers. This matter certainly came up for discussion before the bank officers since I saw you, and the president had certain propositions to lay before you as your brother's representative."

"Yes, but they were not favorable." "So? Was the interview final?" "No. I am to see him again tomorrow." "What are you to decide?" "Don't ask me. I cannot comply with his demands." Mr. Howe rose and paced back and forth in the pretty room. Miss Barclay sat as if motion were impossible to her. She became aware that Mr. Howe had stopped beside her and was resting his slender hand on the table near which she sat. The hand was white and delicate, and something made her look up and catch his glance. His fairness made his face almost boyish, and his eyes had in them the frank expression and the blue of childhood. He spoke calmly.

"Why may I not ask?" "It can do no good. I cannot explain." "You amaze me! There is nothing that may not be openly discussed in this matter. In fact, there are no secrets connected with it now." "I suppose not with my brother's crime."

"Then with what, pray, has secrecy to do? Miss Barclay, there is no personal question involved? Impossible! What do you mean? I insist upon knowing precisely what has passed between that man and you. He would not dare!" Mr. Howe's languor changed to the other extreme. His eyes shone, his voice was full of decision, his manner that of

"Yes, one that takes us on a pleasant journey." "Miss Barclay, may I take this letter for a few hours?" Her great, sad eyes met Mr. Howe's. "Would that be honorable? He misunderstood me. He said I tempted him."

"Indeed! He put the blame on you. Well, I can believe that his thoughts would never grasp yours. We are limited by our undertakings, our education, our opportunities. This letter is a very good showing of the man's character. I trust it has made no impression upon you. Believe me, there is a spiritual life as far beyond the physical and mental as life is beyond death—a life that broadens and deepens with each day's experience, the one life that teaches us if we endeavor to follow its teachings. The soul must be considered, fed, cultivated, enjoyed. I pity the man or woman who dares not spend a portion of each day in communion with the soul and its Giver. You know what it is to struggle with evil. Your soul has come out conqueror. How have you developed in the past two weeks? Trouble has made you strong; sorrow has shown you your better self. You can choose the right and yet sympathize with the man who would ruin you forever. Trust me, I will not betray your confidence. I would, however, advise you to keep this letter until this whole matter has reached a settlement. Of course it has no signature, but it bears internal evidence that would tell against him." Mr. Howe drew a chair to the table and sat down, facing Miss Barclay. "Now, let us anticipate somewhat. Tomorrow you intend to grant him this interview?"

"I must." "And your mind is fully made up as to your decision?" His eyes made her hesitate. "Yes, I think it is. Still, when it comes to the point, I may let myself go. I have altered my determination a dozen times since I received his letter. You see, I am so obscure, so insignificant." "That is one view of the subject, I grant."

"Then it is the one chance to save my brother." "And your brother would let you make the sacrifice?" Miss Barclay was silent for some minutes. "I can understand his desperation," she said, with anxiety. "Perhaps, when it comes to the last, Mr. Messenger will have mercy upon him and spare both, because of my love, should I agree."

"Poor girl! You cannot tell what you will do a few hours hence. Your anxiety is not for yourself. Yet I feel sure that your conscience will assert itself and keep you from the power of your emotions. I wish I could assist you to calm judgment." "I wonder why you are here!" "To tell you that should the bank officers withdraw their charges against your brother I can obtain employment for him in another part of the country."

"It sounds like mockery after listening to Mr. Messenger's words. He alone can help us." "I think you are right. I had no idea that this man could control so much money, but he is interested in several stock companies and no doubt has the means at command." "You think he would do all that he promises?" "Yes, even if his passion led him into crime. He could take trust money and replace your brother's deficit. I tell you, if you yield to evil you increase the inclination to it in others. Therefore, if possible, be strong to do right and let results follow. No one is required to sin in order to take another's burden."

"I know you are right. I am glad you came. I was beginning to fear for my reason." "I should have been here sooner. I was detained. It grieves me to see you suffer so." "It cannot be helped. Think how much more Jasper suffers. Then, his wife!" "I see. I shall be anxious until your interview tomorrow is concluded."

"Listen. I am going to do right. You have shown me the way. I can suffer. I am learning how so quickly. Will you come again to hear what I have to tell? We are quite alone here, deserted. Do you know that I forgot to tell Jasper of your kindness? I was too excited, too troubled." "It is his best as it is." "Once tomorrow is past, everything that we dread will happen. Will you care to come then?" "Yes."

"You are too good." "Oh, no. Others feel for you as I do, but probably see no way to help you and are fearful of intruding upon you. A good woman never lacks sympathy. For that matter, neither does a bad one. Some one can always be found ready to excuse poor human nature. Now I must leave you. I have a great deal to attend to before I can see you again. I must set about it without delay. Just at this moment I am supposed to be in Colorado pursuing health. You look surprised. I may explain in the future. Remember I am going away with perfect confidence in your fidelity to conscience."

"That helps me." "You must be firm in your resolution to help yourself." "I am beginning to fear that my strength will give out. I hate the idea of seeing that man again." She looked up. "I could write to him." "I can appreciate that feeling. Still, I think it would be wiser for you to control your dislike of meeting him and face the interview tomorrow. Otherwise you might hereafter regret your want of courage."

"I suppose you are right. I will promise you to go." "At 2 o'clock in the afternoon you will be in Mr. Messenger's office?" "Yes." He rose and offered Miss Barclay his hand, and without hesitation she put hers into it.

"And you will be brave for conscience's sake?" "Yes." He pressed her hand, bowed and left

her. When Miss Barclay went up stairs, Mrs. Barclay was quite excited. "So that detective has been here again? What did he want?" Miss Barclay felt her cheeks flushing. "I never thought of him as a detective. He came to inquire how our affairs are progressing."

"He knows more about them than we do. Oh, Belle, when will all this perplexity be ended?" "Tomorrow afternoon." "And you hope for something?" "Monsieur, let us try and put this away from us for tonight." She suddenly threw her arms around Mrs. Barclay. "I must save all my strength for tomorrow."

"Still I know that you are expecting—" "Mollie! Mollie!" Miss Barclay made her escape to her own room. Once alone, she repeated to herself Mr. Howe's words and tried to strengthen and nerve herself by recalling them. She even sought solace in them. The long, sleepless night at last ended in dawn, and the exhausted girl rose and occupied herself with little offices for the children. She had to take the noon train, and even the effort to dress wearied her. Once seated in the car, she felt her courage revive. The sea breeze proved invigorating during the few minutes spent on the North river boat. She walked from the ferryhouse to the bank, and as she opened the heavy door discovered that her nerves were very unsteady. Could she trust herself to persevere? It was just 2 o'clock. She paused at the first desk to ask if she might see the president, but her lips would not do anything but quiver. So she passed on to the well known door, opened it and entered quickly, suspecting her own courage. The man whom she dreaded to see rose, came forward and offered his hand and then stood gazing at her inquiringly. With clear, steady eyes, Miss Barclay had met his easy, confident smile and withheld her hand.

"I am here," she said, her voice sounding thin and sharp. "I will not do what you ask." "So you are satisfied with the results of your rejection of my offer?" "No, no. You know I am not. But I have thought it all over. We must suffer the disgrace, the misery, even poverty. After all, thousands of women earn their bread honestly and keep their self respect. I can do it. But surely you will have mercy upon my brother. Perhaps you have been trying me. Have pity and think how I will always honor you as a kind, good friend."

"I offered you my terms, Miss Barclay. Listen. Sit down. Let me urge my claim." "No. Don't touch me! Don't mention that again! I won't hear you!" "Then you can go." "Are you human?" "Yes, thoroughly so." "It cannot be true. Were all men like you, the world would come to an end. Nature would reject her own work. You disgrace humanity."

"Miss Barclay, your words can be overheard. You must leave me. I certainly confided in your sense of honor. You are not willing to accept my terms. The matter is ended between us. I insist upon your going. If you will not leave the room, I shall." Miss Barclay left the room. She walked slowly like a blind woman along the narrow passage. At the door a man overtook her.

"Are you Miss Barclay?" She nodded and tried to regard him with composure. His manner was wholly businesslike. "Mr. Messenger would like to see you for a few moments." The message filled her with strange hope. Again she turned and followed her guide, who preceded her into a room opposite the one she had just quitted. It was a much larger apartment, containing a center table, around which a number of men were seated. She was given a cushioned chair, and then a voice seemed to reach her from a great way off.

"Miss Barclay, I am happy to inform you that we have reconsidered your brother's case and concluded to withdraw all our claims against him. This is due to two facts—his many years of faithful service and the very helpless condition of his family. To follow up this suit would do us no good and might be productive of much harm to his innocent wife and children. He is almost completely indebted to our president, Mr. Messenger, for this clemency. We think it best that he should know that Mr. Messenger has all along urged us in the direction of mercy. Your brother is now as free as ever and at liberty to take immediate measures for the support of his family. We congratulate you, Miss Barclay, on your sisterly devotion, your courage under grief and difficulties and your persistent efforts in his behalf. You have offered us an example which restores our faith in human nature."

Bewildered, dizzy, silenced, her heart throbbing with joy inexpressible, Miss Barclay sat and gazed at the speaker. Then her eyes wandered in search of Mr. Messenger. In vain; he was not in the group, but Mr. Howe was watching her with eager eyes, brilliant with reflected happiness. She started and flushed.

Presently the men rose, shook hands with her and left the room. Mr. Howe retained his seat. His voice sounded peculiarly sweet and soothing. "Happiness must affect us as sunshine does the flowers. You are transformed. Do not revert to the sad for a moment. Your brother will be notified at once by telegraph of this decision." "And Mr. Messenger? Has he here? I did not see him. I must. How shall I ever thank him? I have wronged him, misjudged him. I want to tell him how sorry I feel."

"One moment." Mr. Howe's voice had lost its music. His manner was reserved; his words came slowly as if chosen with difficulty. "The truth is that Mr. Messenger owes you an explanation. It is this: At the time of the cashier's sudden death the president of the bank was taken very ill and was obliged to resign. His son, who bears the same name, undertook his duties and was duly appointed to succeed him. After a

few weeks of hard work the young man decided to leave town for several days, and he selected a trustworthy substitute to represent him. He had made all his arrangements for his absence, and was leaving the bank when you attracted his attention by asking if you might see the president. Need I say any more?" "I don't think I understand you."

"The mystery is simple enough. You excited his interest and curiosity. He hastily returned to the room adjoining the one you entered, and thus overheard your conversation with"— "You mean that I have never seen Mr. Messenger?" "I was going to name the man whom you met, but as you may never see him again perhaps it is well to be charitable. We will not judge him. Miss Barclay, Mr. Messenger, after listening to your pleading, followed you up Broadway and assisted you into a car. You have no recollection of him whatever?"

"None. And he has been our friend. We shall never be able to prove our gratitude, never." "He has a young man's sympathy for your brother. He was a child when your brother came here, and he has pleasant recollections as a schoolboy of Jasper Barclay. Human nature is as good and as bad as it always was. We young men can see the flaws in the methods adopted by our elders. In your brother's case the remedy was too late, but Messenger set to work to prevent further suffering. His holiday is over, but I think it was well spent. Miss Barclay, can you forgive him for the suffering which he caused you? It was unintentional. He had perfect confidence in the integrity of the man who represented him."

"I know that. I only wish I could see him. Why did he not stay to hear me? If I could only make him understand how I appreciate his goodness." "He knows all about it." "From you? So then he sent you to me." "Yes and no. Miss Barclay, this is not the place that I would have chosen in which to make my confession. Still I must know how I stand with you. Will you give me the right to call you Isabella? Will you forgive me for the test that I subjected you to this day? I, too, suffered keenly, but I had to satisfy myself about your strength of character. The pain was shared, and I was at hand to protect you. You can repay me richly if I have served you. I wish I could see you smile. It must be glorious to hear you laugh. Come, let me look into your eyes. I can read my fate in them. I have won you, have I not?"

"But this is not thanking Mr. Messenger." "No, but it is giving him a wife." He gently took her hands and watched her questioning eyes. "But for your utter absorption in your brother's troubles I could not have learned your value so thoroughly. Sweetheart, your lover was winning you under an assumed name. You are so charmingly unconscious, so overwrought, that your mind will not act. Hereafter there shall be no mysteries, no sorrows, but those that we can bear together. From this moment let me make you happy; let me see you smiling, with your heart at rest. Will you love me as Philip Messenger?"

THE END.

New York Newspaper Veterans.

The Dansville Advertiser adds several names to our list of editors of country newspapers in this state who have been in the harness for 25 years or more, though we made no attempt to make a complete list. We mentioned the names of McKinstry of the Fredonia Censor, Gane of the Watkins Express, Bunnell of the Dansville Advertiser, Beach of the Brockport Republic, Root of the Niagara Falls Courier, Pomroy of the Niagara Falls Journal and Dudley of the Warsaw New Yorker, and Mr. Bunnell adds the names of Milliken of the Canandaigua Journal, Pratt of the Corning Journal, Parker of the Geneva Gazette, Sanders of the Nunda News, Stowell of the Seneca Falls Reveille and Holden of the Yonkers Gazette. Nearly if not quite all of these men, says Mr. Bunnell, were on the same papers as far back as 1860, and some of them for many previous years. It is pleasant to know that so many newspaper veterans are still in active service. We wish them health and strength and prosperity. — Rochester Post-Express.

Relics of Shakespeare.

Thomas Hornby, whose grandmother, the late Mary Hornby, was once a resident of the old house in which Shakespeare was born, has at his place at Kingsthorpe, England, several valuable relics of the great poet. They include carved oak chests, portions of a carved bedstead, fine oak chairs and several other articles of household furniture. Besides the above Mr. Hornby is also the owner of Shakespeare's iron chest or "treasure box," an old sword that formerly belonged to the bard and several contemporary paintings, one of which is framed with the wood of the famous mulberry tree. — St. Louis Republic.

A Burglar Alarm.

Jimmy Hope, the ex-burglar, is living quietly in this city. He is often seen on Broadway, but always alone. One day he was asked if there was such a thing in existence as a burglar alarm that could be depended upon. "Yes," he replied. "A dark house will never be entered by any one but a greenhorn. Groping about in a house where there is no light is a thing that appalls the boldest housebreaker." — New York World.

Professor Was Absent-Minded.

Prof. Dusel, of Bonn, noticed one day his wife placing a large bouquet on his desk.

"What does all that mean?" he asked. "Why, this is the anniversary of your marriage," replied Mrs. Dusel. "Is that so? Well, let me know when yours comes round and I'll reciprocate."

Attorney—What was there about the deceased that led you to believe he was of unsound mind? Witness—Well, for one thing, he abhorred bicycles. — Philadelphia North American.



WIVES IN POLITICAL LIFE.

SOME politicians readily agree with ex-Senator Hill of New York that a man in public life is hindered rather than helped by being married. It is noticeable, though, that most men who entertain this view are, like Mr. Hill, confirmed bachelors. It may be that Mr. Hill has demonstrated by his own experience and to his own satisfaction that celibacy and the ignoring of social life are conditions of political success, but if the distinguished gentleman will stop to look over the members of that august body of which he was so lately a member, or the members of Congress or the list of successful statesmen and politicians in any one of the States, he will discover that the overwhelming majority of them are men who have willingly become Cupid's victims.

Perhaps no better illustration can be given of how valuable to a politician a wife may be than was furnished by the late Senator Logan, who many a time and often expressed absolute confidence in his wife's judgment, never failing to act in accordance therewith. Gladstone, who is admitted to be one of the greatest of English politicians, has paid worthy tribute to the services of his devoted and thoughtful wife, who has striven so faithfully to promote his success in the field of politics, and there are not a few other Englishmen in politics who find efficient political helpmeets and shrewd campaign managers in their wives. Turning to this country, we find America's political history replete with instances of the successful participation of wives in the political life of their husbands, and the great majority of our statesmen have paid considerable attention to social life.

David B. Hill may find his life of celibacy "one grand sweet song," but the great majority of men would tire of their solo singing after a time. Be this as it may, most American youths will undoubtedly prefer to emulate the example of those men who, while possessing marked abilities, have thought it not good that man should be alone, and have not hesitated to enter the field of matrimony through fear of thus impeding any political chances they might have.

Two Handsome Suits.



Elegant riding habit of hunter's green ladies' cloth, made with adjustable skirt, the folds being caught up and fastened on the left so that it is "walking length" when my lady is off the horse. There is a severely tailor-made coat, with the new coat sleeve, slightly fluted on the shoulder. There are cloth-covered buttons. Chic bicycle suit of gray covert cloth, accordion-plated skirt. The pretty blouse is trimmed with black silk in Norfolk effect, and there is a perfectly new style of what is called the wheel collar, braided, giving a tab effect. There are eight double rows of braid ornamenting the skirt at intervals of one and one-half feet, also two rows of the braid on the lower edge give a neat finish to the skirt.

Proper Food for Beauty.

Clear complexions do not wait on the fickle, nor rosy cheeks on the morning griddle cake. The woman who intends to have a good complexion must make a careful study of the food question. It goes without saying that sugary substances must be banished from the bill of fare. Candies are, of course, excluded. Cakes follow in their wake. As for pies and all other compounds of flour and grease, they are fatal to clear skins. Bread that is doughy or starchy ranks almost as low as pastry in the estimation of the seeker after good looks. Whatever excites the nerves or overheats the blood tends toward the final destruction of the smooth, peachy texture which is the chief of every woman's ambition to attain. Whatever has the effect of producing a healthy action of the digestive organs is good for the complexion. Acid and laxative fruits especially, if taken at breakfast, are good. Graham bread and toast rank high among the bread benefactors. Red and juicy meats, green vegetables, milk and eggs, are all conducive to the attaining of a brilliant complexion.

A Home-Made Rue.

Have your blacksmith bend two heavy wires in the shape of a hair pin, twenty-four inches long and two inches between the prongs. On these wind woolen rags cut half an inch wide, winding them in and out as you crimp your hair. Prepare a foundation—a piece of old Ingrain carpet or a coffee sack answers well, the carpet being the best. Lay one of the filled pins on one end of the foundation and stitch down

through the center on the machine, out the pin and lay the other, similar, filled, in place, pressing back the wire from which you pulled the wire, so that the next row close to the rows of stitching should not be more than three-quarters of an inch apart. The loops may be cut or whole. Two persons can work at advantage, one winding the thread the other doing the stitching. The thus made is very durable. Dark colors are preferable; hit-and-miss give good effect.

Pretty Wedding Custom.

One of the pretty features of the old English wedding is the tiny and miniature man who attends the bride as bridesmaid and page. It may be one little pair or three or four, but they make a very pretty picture in their quaint costumes following the bride to the altar. The small boys usually dressed in court costumes of white satin or cloth embroidered



MAIDS AND PAGES.

silver or gold, and decorated with paste buttons. Sapphire blue is a favorite dress, and with the large hat and white feather it is very attractive.

The little page illustrated was of three at a recent fashionable ding. The costume is a white blouse with Vandyke collar and knee breeches with rhinestone buttons and a cape of green velvet lined with white satin hanging from one shoulder. The three little maids who accompany the pages had white satin gowns edged with white chiffon, frilled cuffs, and mob caps of green velvet. Another quaint little costume is a long dress of white satin with bishop sleeves and a deep collar of white chiffon around the neck with three rows of narrow lace.

Black Satin Skirts.

Women who have black satin need not think because light-colored skirts are now so much favored the former useful possession is to be thrown away. They will be worn just as much, and this is something to feel happy over, for they can be brought into use, and always well and generally in place.

What Women Are Doing.

Two women are about to establish a factory in Atlanta, Ga., for the manufacture of a bicycle tire they have invented.

Mrs. Nansen, Sr., mother of the known explorer, Dr. Nansen, is credited with having inaugurated a healthful pastime for women of gaining and gliding on snowshoes.

Miss Frances Bray has been named the second woman in the Kingdom entitled to add the LL.D. to her name. The first, titia Walkington, is likewise a woman and a native of Belfast.

The queerest fact on record is Miss Dell Ten Eyck, of West Mass., who amuses herself by taming all sorts of strostiles. She has jars of them and says she really enjoys the game.

Cuban women of the family insurgents are inculcating with their children. A primer has been printed in Cuba setting forth revolutionary sentiments in an appropriate manner.

Mrs. Zella Nuttall, the archæologist whose explanation of the Meander stone has elicited surprise and praise from scientific men, is at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is lecturing on the ethnology of Riga, Russia.

Flings at the Fair Sex.

She—I can sympathize with you was married once myself. you wasn't married to a woman.

Mrs. Kuddler—Do you know that everybody says the baby like me? Mr. Kuddler—Anne; the baby is now months old and it has never word.—Boston Transcript.

If a woman should select a man suited to her disposition as she matches her gowns to her complexion there might not be so much path from the marriage altar to the divorce court.—Atchison Globe.

"Why do you send Blum some and costly present of Saxe?" "Just because you Blum married the girl that used to marry me. I can't do for him."—Detroit Free Press.

Charlie to his friend Bob—You think of this new piece of wire, Bob? Why, it's instantaneous, isn't it? Charlie makes you think so, Bob, well, because she has her own.—New York Tribune.



"He would not dare."

a person accustomed to giving orders. Miss Barclay mechanically drew the letter from her pocket and placed it on the table.

He read it rapidly, then carefully and finally looked at her bent head and burning cheeks.

"Am I to believe that he made this proposition to you in words last Saturday afternoon?"

Miss Barclay tried in vain to raise her eyes and speak. After a moment she gave way to passionate tears. Mr. Howe watched her.

"I think you are wise to let your feelings overpower your reasoning faculties. The truth is that you have been putting great restraint upon yourself for days, and the reaction has to come. I hope you will forget this letter."

"How can it? It must be answered, and my brother must go to prison. It will haunt me as long as I live."

"Your decision, then, is made?" "Yes. Misery is not so terrible as disgrace, and it cannot last very long." "It will kill you." "Yes. I used to regard death as something to dread, but it may come as a friend."