

The PLACE OF HONEY-MOONS

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Pictures
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SYNOPSIS.

Eleanora de Toscana was singing in Paris, which, perhaps, accounted for Edward Courtland's appearance there. Multimillionaire, he wandered about where fancy dictated. He might be in Paris one day and Kamchatka the next. Following the opera he goes to a cafe and is ac-

CHAPTER II—Continued.

There was a minute wrinkle above the unknown's nose; the shadow of a frown. "She is very beautiful."

"Be! Did she send you after me? Give me her address. I have come all the way from Burma to see Flora Desimone."

"To see her?" She unguardedly clothed the question with contempt, but she instantly forced a smile to neutralize the effect. Concerned with her own defined conclusions, she lost the fine ironic bitterness that was in the man's voice.

"Aye, indeed, to see her! Beautiful as Venus, as alluring as Phryne, I want nothing so much as to see her, to look into her eyes, to hear her voice!"

"Is it jealousy? I hear the tragic note." The certainty of her ground became as morass again. In his turn he was puzzling her.

"Tragedy? I am an American. We do not kill opera singers. We turn them over to the critics. I wish to see the beautiful Flora, to ask her a few questions. If she has sent you after me, her address, my dear young lady, her address." His eyes burned.

"I am afraid." And she was so. This wasn't the tone of a man madly in love. It was wild anger.

"Afraid of what?"

"You."

"I will give you a hundred francs." He produced a crisp note. "Do you want it?"

She did not answer at once. Presently she opened her purse, found a stubby pencil and a slip of paper, and wrote. "There it is, monsieur." She held out her hand for the banknote which, with a sense of bafflement, he gave her. She folded the note and stowed it away with the pencil.

"Thank you," said Courtland. "Odd paper, though." He turned it over. "Ah, I understand. You copy music."

"Yes, monsieur."

This time the nervous flicker of her eyes did not escape him. "You are studying for the opera, perhaps?"

"Yes, that is it."

"Good night." He rose.

"Monsieur is not gallant."

"I was in my youth," he replied, putting on his hat.

The bald rudeness of his departure did not disturb her. She laughed softly and relievedly. Indeed, there was in the laughter an essence of mischief. However, if he carried away a mystery, he left one behind.

The young woman waited five or ten minutes, and, making sure that Courtland had been driven off, left the restaurant. Round the corner she engaged a carriage. So that was Edward Courtland? She liked his face; there was not a weak line in it, unless stubbornness could be called such. But to stay away for two years! To hide himself in jungles, to be heard of only by his harebrained exploits! "Follow him; see where he goes," had been the command. For a moment she had rebelled, but her curiosity was not to be denied. Besides, of what use was friendship if not to be tried? She knew nothing of the riddle, she had never asked a question openly. She had accidentally seen a photograph one day, in a trunk tray, with this man's name scrawled across it, and upon this flimsy base she had bulidied a dozen romances, each of which she had ruthlessly torn down to make room for another; but still the riddle lay unsolved. She had thrown the name into the conversation many a time, as one might throw a bomb into a crowd which had no chance to escape. Fizzles! The man had been calmly discussed and calmly dismissed. At odd times an article in the newspapers gave her an opportunity; still the frank discussion, still the calm dismissal. She had learned that the man was rich, irresponsible, vacillating, a picturesque sort of fool. But two years? What had kept him away that long? A weak man, in love, would not have made so tame a surrender. Perhaps he had not surrendered; perhaps neither of them had.

And yet, he sought the Calabrian. Here was another blind alley out of which she had to retrace her steps. Bother! That Puck of Shakespeare was right: What fools these mortals be! She was very glad that she possessed a true sense of humor, spiced with harmless audacity. What a dreary world it must be to those who did not know how and when to laugh! They talked of the daring of the American woman; who but a Frenchwoman would have dared what she had this night? The taxicab! She laughed. And this man was wax in the hands of any pretty woman who came along! So rumor had it. But she knew that rumor was only the attenuated ghost of Ananias, doomed forever to remain on earth for the propagation of inaccurate whispers. Wax! Why, she would have trusted herself in any situation with a man with those eyes and that angle of jaw. It was all very mystifying. "Follow him; see where he goes." The frank discussion, then, and the calm dismissal were but a woman's dissimulation. And he had gone to Flora Desimone's.

The carriage stopped before a handsome apartment house in the Avenue de Wagram. The unknown got out, gave the driver his fare, and rang the concierge's bell. The sleepy guardian opened the door, touched his gold-braided cap in recognition, and led the way to the small electric lift. The young woman entered and familiarly pushed the button. The apartment in which she lived was on the second floor; and there was luxury everywhere, but luxury subdued and charmed by taste.

She threw aside her hat and wraps with that manner of inconsequence which distinguishes the artistic temperament from the thrifty one, and

passed on into the cozy dining room. The maid had arranged some sandwiches and a bottle of light wine. She ate and drank, while intermittent smiles played across her merry face. Having satisfied her hunger, she opened her purse and extracted the banknote. She smoothed it out and laughed aloud.

"Oh, if only he had taken me for a ride in the taxicab!" She bubbled again with merriment.

Suddenly she sprang up, as if inspired, and dashed into another room, a study. She came back with pen and ink, and with a celerity that came of long practice, drew five straight lines across the faint violet face of the banknote. Within these lines she made little dots at the top and bottom of stubby perpendicular strokes, and strange interlinear hieroglyphics, and sweeping curves, all of which would have puzzled an Egyptologist if he were unused to the ways of musicians. Carefully she dried the composition, and then put the note away. Some day she would confound him by returning it.

A little later her fingers were moving softly over the piano keys; melodies in minor, sad and haunting and elusive, melodies that had never been put on paper and would always be her own; in them she might leap from comedy to tragedy, from laughter to tears, and only she would know. The midnight adventure was forgotten, and the hero of it, too. With her eyes closed and her lithe body swaying gently, she let the old weary pain in her heart take hold again.

CHAPTER III.

The Beautiful Tigress.

Flora Desimone had been born in a Calabrian peasant's hut, and she had rolled in the dust outside, yelling vigorously at all times. Specialists declare that the reason for all great singers coming from lowly origin is found in this early development of the throat. Parents of means employ nurses or sedatives to suppress or at least to smother these infantile protests against being thrust inconsiderately into the turmoil of human beings. Flora yelled or slept, as the case might be; her parents were equally indifferent. They were too busily concerned with the getting of bread and wine. Moreover, Flora was one among many. The gods are always playing with the Calabrian peninsula, heaving it up here or throwing it down there; il terremoto, the earthquake, the terror. Here nature tinkers vicariously with souls; and she seldom has time to complete her work. Constant communion with death makes for callosity of feeling; and the Calabrians and the Sicilians are the cruelest among the civilized peoples. Flora was ruthless.

She lived amazingly well in the premier of an apartment-hotel in the Champs-Elysees. In England and America she had amassed a fortune. Given the warm beauty of the southern Italian, the passion, the temperament, the love of mischief, the natural cruelty, the inordinate craving for attention and flattery, she enlivened the nations with her affairs. And she never put a single beat of her heart into any of them. That is why her voice is still splendid and her beauty unchanging. She did not dissipate; calculation always barred her inclination; rather, she loitered about the Forbidden Tree and played that she had plucked the Apple. She had an example to follow; Eve had none.

Men scattered fortunes at her feet as foolish Greeks scattered floral offerings at the feet of their marble gods—without provoking the sense of reciprocity or generosity or mercy. She had worked; ah, no one would ever know how hard. She had been crushed, beaten, cursed, starved. That she had risen to the heights in spite of these bruising verbs in no manner enlarged her pity, but dulled and vitiated the little there was of it. Her mental attitude toward humanity was childish; as, when the parent strikes, the child blindly strikes back. She was determined to play, to enjoy life, to give back blow for blow, nor caring where she struck. She was going to press the juice from every grape. A thousand odd years gone, she would have led the cry in Rome—"Bread and the circus!" or "To the lions!" She would have disturbed Nero's complacency, and he would have played an obbligato instead of a solo at the burning. And she was malice incarnate. They came from all climes—her lovers—with roubles and lire and francs and shillings and dollars; and those who finally escaped her enchantment did so involuntarily, for lack of further funds. They called her villas Circe's Isles. She hated but two things in the world; the man she could have loved and the woman she could not surpass. Some one was at the speaking-tube.

The singer crossed the room impatiently. "What is it?" she asked in French.

The voice below answered with a query in English. "Is this the Signorina Desimone?"

"Yes. And now that my identity is established, who are you and what do you want at this time of night?"

"I am Edward Courtland."

"Well, what is it you wish?" amiably.

"You once did me an ill turn," came

up the tube. "I desire that you make some reparation."

"Sainted Mother! But it has taken you a long time to find out that I have injured you," she mocked.

"Will you give me her address, please? Your messenger gave me your address, inferring that you wished to see me."

"I? There was no impeaching her astonishment."

"Yes, madame."

"My dear Mr. Courtland, you are the last man in all the wide world I wish to see. And I do not quite like the way you are making your request."

"Do you not think, madame, that you owe me something?"

"No. What I owe I pay. Think, Mr. Courtland; think well."

"I do not understand," impatiently.

"Ebbene, I owe you nothing. Once I heard you say—I do not like to see you with the Calabrian; she is—well, you know." I stood behind you at another time when you said that I was a fool."

"Madame, I do not forget that, that is pure invention. You are mistaken."

"No. You were. I am no fool." A light laugh drifted down the tube.

"Madame, I begin to see."

"Ah!"

"You believe what you wish to believe."

"I think not."

"I never even noticed you," carelessly.

"It is easy to forget," cried the diva, furiously. "It is easy for you to forget, but not for me."

"Madame, I do not forget that you entered my room that night."

"I shall give you her address," interrupted the diva, hastily. The play had gone far enough, much as she would have liked to continue it. This



The Beautiful Tigress.

was going deeper than she cared to go. She gave the address and added: "Tonight she sings at the Austrian ambassador's. I give you this information gladly because I know that it will be of no use to you."

"Then I shall dispense with the formality of thanking you. I add that I wish you two-fold the misery you have carelessly and gratuitously cost me. Good night!" Click! went the little covering of the tube.

With the same inward bitterness that attends the mental processes of a performing tiger on being sent back to its cage, Courtland returned to his taxicab. He wanted to roar and lash and devour something. Instead, he could only twist the ends of his moustache savagely. It did not seem possible that any woman could be so full of malice. He simply could not understand. It was essentially the Italian spirit; doubtless, till she heard his voice, she had forgotten all about the episode that had foundered his ship of happiness.

Her statement as to the primal cause was purely inventive. There was not a grain of truth in it. He could not possibly have been so rude. He had been too indifferent. Too indifferent! The repetition of the phrase made him sit straighter. Phaw! It could not be that. He possessed a little vanity; if he had not, his history would not have been worth a scrawl. But he denied the possession vehemently, as men are wont to do.

Too indifferent! Was it possible that he had roused her enmity simply because he had made it evident that her charms did not interest him? Beyond lifting his hat to her, perhaps exchanging a comment on the weather, his courtesies had not been extended. Courtland was peculiar in some respects. A woman attracted him, or she did not. In the one case he was affable, winning, pleasant, full of those agreeable little surprises that in turn attract a woman. In the other case, he passed on, for his impressions were instant and did not require the usual skirmishing.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FAMOUS DOLL'S HOUSE

UTRECHT HAS ABODE THAT IS IN A MEASURE UNIQUE.

In the Queen Anne Style, It is Declared to Be a Complete Model of Its Time, to the Smallest Detail.

Of all the treasures Utrecht possesses first and foremost is its world-famous doll's house. It is the purest Queen Anne abode, complete down to the tiniest detail. Ordinary houses can never give the entire idea of her period as this little one can. For, naturally, in the process of time the arrangement of everything alters; the structure is rebuilt, furniture and hangings wear out and are discarded and later styles are introduced.

Whereas our doll's house, made not later than the end of the 17th century, has remained behind closed glass doors, lovingly cherished by Dutch housewives, the most careful and conservative of their kind, and it shows us just how the Dutchman of those days lived, and very much how the Englishman of a rather late date arranged his home.

And now to come to the doll's house and its history.

It has evidently always been considered a masterpiece, for so long ago as 1738 we find literature on the subject. The chronicler says that it owes its existence to a noble lady of Amsterdam, but does not give her name. Not only did she lavish years and the utmost loving care upon her hobby, but it cost her a small fortune besides, certainly over \$5,000. It was probably begun toward 1675 and finished about 1690.

We know that in the early days of the 18th century it belonged to a rich Amsterdam tobacco merchant, from whom it passed to his daughter, who married a man with the romantic name of Slob. Mrs. Slob bequeathed it to her daughter, who also left it to a daughter. This lady died at a very great age in Utrecht, leaving the doll's house as a legacy to the city.

Not only this, but it had also gone through a crisis that few doll houses can boast of. It had actually been burgled. One dark night in 1831, when it was temporarily located in a country village, thieves broke through and stole not only the gilt chandelier, the pride of the drawing-room, but also the silvered fireirons, a tortoise shell inlaid cabinet, a chest of amber, inlaid with gold and ivory, and the plate-chest full of baby spoons and forks. Luckily the house was so amply provided that the furniture was not missed, but the owner, distressed that the dolls should be driven to eat with their fingers, at once ordered a similar set to be made as quickly as possible.

Labeled the Children.

The crowded water front of the old Canton of a century ago, with its thronging sampans alive from stem to stern with swarming children, is vividly pictured in the "Memoirs of William Hickey." In his account of the innumerable boats that covered the river for mile after mile, Mr. Hickey describes a novel method of protecting the children of the floating city from the dangers of the water.

Each child wore a large vegetable something like a gourd or pumpkin fastened to its back. The vegetable was buoyant, of course, and, if the infant fell overboard, floated it until the child was picked up by its parents or the occupants of any other sampan that happened to be near. This regtable life-preserver had the name and station of the sampan to which it belonged cut in Chinese characters upon it, and by that means the rescuers could at once identify the child; otherwise, in such a multitude of boats great confusion would have arisen. It scarcely ever happened that anyone was drowned.

London's Newest Museum.

The Historical Medical Museum is London's newest museum. The collections, which occupy a space of 40,000 feet, are extraordinarily comprehensive in character. There are relics of famous men in medicine and science generally, a reconstruction of early laboratories and old chemists' shops, models of hospitals of the sixteenth century, and sick rooms of the period, built after authentic plans and pictures. Another section will be devoted to primitive medicine and to charms and amulets.

Put's Airships in Prayers.

Under the orders of Emperor William, as the head of the Lutheran church, and with the consent of the Lutheran synod, the general prayer, which is said weekly in all Lutheran churches, now asks the protection of God for the aerial service as well as for the army and navy. The sentence, as amended, reads:

"Protect the king's army and the entire German war forces on land and sea, and particularly the ships and airships while on their journeys."

COULDN'T MAKE THE TOUCH

Old Gentleman Would Put Up With One Disappointment, But He Was Not Looking for Another.

The young man had borrowed five dollars from the rich old man, promising to bring it back one week from date. The millionaire let him have it, and at the promised time the borrower brought it back.

"Now, Mr. Bullion," said the young man, "I've been square with you in this matter, and I want to borrow \$50 for a fortnight."

The old man shook his head.

"Sorry," he said, "but I can't let you have it."

"Why not?" and the young man was greatly astonished.

"Because you have disappointed me, and I don't want to be disappointed again."

The borrower was more surprised than ever.

"What do you mean by being disappointed?" he asked.

"This," explained the moneyed man.

"I let you have that five dollars, not expecting ever to get it again, and I did. Now, if I let you have \$50 I should expect to get it again, and I never would. No, sir," he added, conclusively, "one disappointment is enough. Good day!" And that ended it.

Failure of Artificial Food.

That it is possible to live on artificial food, or at least on the concentrated extracts of certain staples, is a common belief, and it has even been predicted that some day our diet will consist of tabloid food. One might live for a short time in that unseeable way, but recent investigation of diseases like beri-beri, scurvy and pellagra, which are almost certainly caused by a deficiency in the diet, prove that such a life would be one of disease and could not last long.

Contrary.

Knick—"Does the dentist drill your teeth?" Knack—"Yes; but he can't make them act right."—Judge.

