

THE GIRL WITH A MILLION

By D. C. Murray

CHAPTER I.

A little dell in the heart of a wood was deliciously dappled with leafy shadows. A loosely clad man, bearded and spectacled, and a little on the right side of forty, sat on a camp stool before a small field easel, and labeled the landscape at his ease, pausing at his work now and then and drawing back his head to survey it with an air of charmed appreciation. Near him, on the gnarled trunk of a tree and in the shadow of a moss-grown rock, sat a lady some ten or a dozen years younger, leisurely torturing thread into lace with a hooked needle.

A little way down the dell a boy was clambering among the rocks, shrieking every now and then with ecstatic news of a beetle or a butterfly. He was a sturdy, blue-eyed, golden-haired little fellow of five, the picture of health, and he was risking his limbs and chattering to all animate and inanimate nature—a delightful boy, and all alive from his golden head to his restless feet and tips of his brown little fingers. The mother snatched him to her arms and covered him with kisses. Evidently she looked up, flushed, half piteous, with a flash of tears in her eyes.

"Austin, I feel afraid. Have I a right to be so happy? Has any one a right to be so happy? Will it last?"

"Who knows?" he answered. "Human affairs run in averages, but then the averages are not individual. We have had almost trouble enough in our time to have paid for a little joy. Let us take it gratefully."

"Sometimes," she said, "a shadow seems to fall upon it all—the shadow of a fear." "The shadow of the past—experience. The burned child dreads the fire. We are burned children, both of us. Five years' illness and poverty out of seven years of married life is a large allowance. And, after all, our present happiness isn't phenomenal, my dear, though it looks so. We have health, and we value it because we have each missed it in turn. We have a little money, and we think it a great deal because we have been so deadly poor. And then," he laughed and half blushed, "we have a little fame, and that is all the pleasanter because we were so long neglected. Sweet is pleasure after pain."

"I am dangerously happy," she answered.

"Come, let us unpack the luncheon basket. Cold chicken. Salad. Bread. Cheese. Milk. There we are. Fall to. Sit down by your mother, Cupid. Take a pull at the milk, old man, and then you'll have an appetite. What a sudden shadow!"

A cloud had floated between themselves and the sun, and a strange quiet had fallen with the shadow on the woods.

"Austin," the wife whispered, "there is that dreadful man again. It seems as if he had brought the darkness with him."

A brown sloping path, covered still with the fir needles shed in the foregoing autumn, broke the wall of green which bounded the dell, and down this footway, between the silver steps of the birches and the reddish stems of the firs, walked a gray-bearded man, with his head drooped forward and his hands clasped behind him. He looked neither to left nor right, but went by as if unconscious of their presence, and in a little while was lost behind the thicker growth of trees. As he went out of sight the sun broke through the cloud, the leafage was inundated with life again and the birds renewed their song.

"Look," she whispered; "the shadow follows him."

"What an odd mood this is to-day!" said her husband, smiling at her. "And why is the poor old gentleman so dreadful?"

"But, Austin, do you know? You can't have heard. He is known to have hatched plots against the Czar."

"Well, yes. It is known also that he has been wifeless and childless this twenty years. His wife and his two sons died in Siberia. They went there without trial, and people who know him say that the loss of them in that horrible way turned his brain. Suppose anybody stole you and little Austin? Suppose he drove you on foot through hundreds of miles of ice and snow? Suppose that he made you herd with the human off-scourings of the world, and that you died after three or four long-drawn, hideous years? It might be wicked, but surely it would not be quite without provocation if I blew that man sky-high. I don't say that regicide is a thing to be commended. I don't defend the poor old gentleman's political opinions. But I do say that human nature is human nature."

Luncheon over, he returned to his painting, to find the lights all changed. He worked away, however, with great contentment for an hour or two, while the wife and the boy wandered beyond the limits of the dell. When they came back they found that he had packed up his traps and was lying at length on the moss, with his face turned to the sky.

"I do this better than I paint," he said, cocking an idle eye at his wife from beneath the soft white felt which rested on his nose. "Shall we get back now?"

"I want to carry something, papa," said the boy, possessing himself of the camp stool. They sauntered on together tranquilly through the twinkling lights which dazzled from between the leaves, and their steps were noiseless on the dense carpet of fir needles. The boy laid down his burden to chase a sulphur-colored butterfly. They had gone a hundred yards before they missed him, and when they turned to look for him he was seen

at the far end of a wooded vista, seated on the camp stool.

"Look at the little figure, Lucy," said the father. "Isn't there something lonely and almost pathetic in it? He looks as if he were waiting for somebody who would never come—a figure of deserted childish patience." He hailed the child and turned away again. "He knows the road?" he asked. "There is no danger of his losing himself?"

"He knows the way," she answered. "We have been here twice a day for a month past."

So they marched on, well pleased, talking of indifferent matters, and the little fellow sat on the camp stool behind them and held animated talk with Nature.

The gray-bearded man wandered through the wood with his chin sunk upon his breast and his eyes fixed upon the ground. He was tall and gaunt and swarthy, and looked as if he had a considerable strain of the Jew in him. His nose was like an eagle's beak and ascetically fine. His temples were hollowed like those of a death's-head, and his eyes, which were large and brown and mournful to the verge of pathos, were the eyes of a born dreamer and a fanatic by nature.

It was already dusk when the old Nilhilist turned his footsteps into the wood, and having just remembered that he had not broken his fast for seven or eight hours, he had somewhat quickened his usual thoughtful pace, when the sound of a sob reached his ear and he stopped suddenly to look about him. Within a yard or two sat the lost child on the camp stool, with his back against a broad tree trunk. The old man knelt on the grass and looked at the sleeping boy. His straw hat had fallen off and lay beside him, his golden hair was tumbled and disordered, his long dark lashes were still wet, and his rosy cheeks were blurred and soiled with the traces of his tears.

"Eh! La, la, la?" said the old fellow, in a pitying accent. "Lost! Did you sleep in despair, dear little heart? In tears? In terror? And God sendeth a hand, ere yet it is night time. To the child, rescue, and to the old man teaching."

Then he took the child softly in his arms, and gathering up the hat and the camp stool, entered the wood. As he did so, a faint and distant cry reached his ears, and he stopped to listen. It was repeated once or twice, faintly and more faintly, and then died away. He started anew almost at a run, but he was old, and the lad was unusually solid and well grown for his years, so that the burden soon told on him, and brought him to a walk again. It was a full mile, from the spot to which the child had wandered to the Cheval Blanc, and when the little hostel was reached the bearer's back and arms were aching rarely. The landlady met him in the passage with a cry.

"Oh, the little Anglais! You have found him, monsieur? Jeanne, run to the woods and tell them that the child is found."

"You know him?" asked Dobroski.

"Who is he? Where does he live?"

"He is the child of the English at the hotel des Postes," answered the woman, standing on tiptoe to kiss the boy. "He has been lost this five hours." Dobroski turned into the street, and the woman followed him talking all the way. "He is the only child of his parents, and their cherished. Imagine, then, the despair of the mother, the inquietude of his father! They are rich. See how the child is dressed. There is nothing you might not ask for."

The old man smiled at this, but said nothing. He surrendered his charge at the hotel, where the boy was received with such noisy demonstrations of pleasure that he awoke. Being awake, and recognizing his surroundings, he adapted himself to them with an immediate philosophy, and demanded something to eat. A second messenger was dispatched to the wood to bring back the party who had gone in search of him.

His mother kissed him frantically and cried over him, but his father set out for the Cheval Blanc to thank his rescuer. He found Dobroski seated in a little room with a sanded floor, and began to stammer his gratitude in broken and mutilated French.

"It was a piece of good fortune to find him," said Dobroski, speaking English, to the other's great relief. "I am delighted that the pleasure was mine."

"I don't know how to thank you," said the Englishman, a little awkwardly, lugging a purse from his trousers pocket. For a moment Dobroski fancied the stranger meant to offer him money, but he merely produced a card, "That's my name," said the Englishman, blunderingly. "Austin Farley. Upon my word, I really don't know how to thank you."

"My good, good sir," returned Dobroski, "what would you have had? What was I to do? He was sure to be found, and it was my good fortune to have found him."

"You must let his mother come and thank you, sir," said the Englishman. "Upon my word I really don't know what to say to tell you how grateful and obliged I am. His mother has been in the greatest anxiety. You must let her come and thank you."

"Well, well, Mr. Farley," the elder man answered, himself a little shy at the other's concealed emotion. "If you will think so mere an accident worth thanks to anybody—But pray tell us say no more."

CHAPTER II.

There was a great crowd of people at the railway station at Namur, and the Luxembourg train had no sooner steamed into the station than it was besieged by the mob, and all the carriages were taken by storm. One tourist, who had furnished himself with a first class ticket, and had shouldered himself through the crowd to the buffet, was exceedingly wroth on his return to find that the carriage he had occupied was filled by third-class excursionists. He spoke French with a fluency, and an inaccuracy in combination with it, which fairly took off his mental feet the official to whom he appealed, and in a very passion and torrent of his oratory rippled audibly the accent of Dublin. He talked all over, arms and hands, finger tips, head, shoulders, and body. He talked with all his features and with all his muscles and with all his might, and at last the official seized his meaning, and proceeded with inexorable politeness to turn out all the third-class passengers. The triumphant tourist stood by, suddenly smiling and unruffled. He had a round, smooth face, with a touch of apple-color on his cheeks, a nose inclining somewhat upward, and an expression of self-satisfaction so complete that it aroused the irony of one of the ejected.

"He is well introduced to himself, that fellow," said he, but the tourist did not hear, or did not care if he heard. He stood tranquilly by, holding the handle of the door, until the carriage was cleared, and was just about to ascend when a slow, quiet voice spoke behind.

"Got that through, old man, eh?"

"The tourist turned suddenly, and stretched out a hand to the speaker.

"What? Maskelyne, me boy. Deloyted. Where are you going?"

"I am going to Janenne by rail," said the other, accepting the proffered hand with a hearty shake, once up and once down. "From there I go on to a little place called Houfoy, to see some old friends of mine."

"I'm going to Janenne meself," said the Irishman. "Can't we ride together?"

"I suppose we can," returned his friend. "Baggage is registered." He was just as calm as the Celt had a minute or two before been eager, and his voice was distinctly American. He was very precisely and neatly attired, his figure was tall and elegant; his face was handsome but melancholy, and curiously pale. The eyes were the best feature—black, soft and lustrous, but they looked as if he had never smiled in his life.

"I say, Fraser," he said, in his slow, mild voice, when they were both seated, "where did you pick up your French? I never heard anything like it."

"I've knocked about Paris a good deal," said Fraser. "I speak Jorman with the same facility, though it's probably me Scotch extraction that gives me that."

Midway between Namur and Luxembourg the two travelers changed trains for Janenne. The engine steamed lazily through a most lovely country, and the young American, looking continually out of window, seemed absorbed in contemplation of the landscape. But it could scarcely have been the landscape which half a dozen times called a dreamy smile to his soft eyes, and once a blush to the sallow pallor of his cheek. When the train drew up in front of the little red brick station, a building planned like a child's toy house and not much bigger, the blush came to his cheek again, and his hand trembled slightly as it caressed his black mustache.

"Well, it's good-by for a time, old fellow," he said, shaking hands with Fraser. "But I will see you again to-morrow or next day, most likely, if you can find time to turn from affairs of state."

"Are those your friends?" asked Fraser, looking through the window as the train crawled slowly along the platform. "An uncommonly pretty gyurl! The old boy looks like an army man. He's waving his hand at ye."

"Yes," said Maskelyne, with his soft drawl a little exaggerated. "That is my man. Good-day, Fraser. Tell O'Rourke I'm down here and that I'll run over and have a look at him."

A minute later he was shaking hands with the young lady who had excited Mr. Fraser's admiration.

"Welcome to the Ardennes, Mr. Maskelyne," said Angela, with frank good humor. "How are all our friends in New York?"

"Thank you, Miss Butler," he answered, looking into her gray eyes with a smile which was all the brighter and the sweeter because of the usual melancholy of his countenance. "I cannot undertake to tell you how all your friends in New York may be, but the few scores of whom I have heard in one way or another since I came to Europe are very well indeed. Major Butler, I am charmed to see you looking so robust. I had not hoped to see you looking so well."

"Dyspepsia," said the major. "When I wrote you I was really ill. I am all right now. But I've been a good deal worried, and when I'm worried I get dyspepsia, and dyspepsia means despair. That your baggage? Got the ticket for it?"

At this point Fraser came up with perfect sang froid, raised his hat to the girl and accosted Maskelyne.

"I say, old man, tell me what's the best place to put up at here?"

"Hotel des Postes," said the major. Mr. Fraser raised his hat to the major. "Let me introduce you," said Maskelyne. "Major Butler, this is Mr. Fraser, a member of your British House of Commons."

"Delighted to meet you!" said the major, but he did not look as if this statement could be accepted.

(To be continued.)

Joshing Her.

Mr. A.—Going downtown to select your spring hat, eh? Well, you better wait until night.

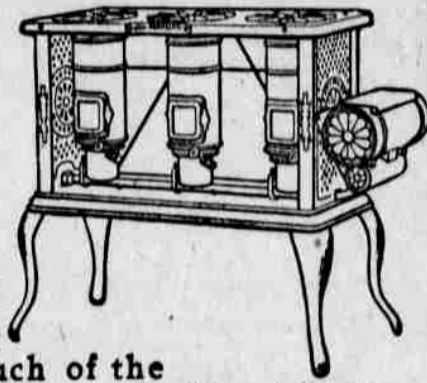
Mrs. A. (in surprise)—Night, George? Why?

Mr. A.—Didn't you say it was going to be a dream?

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Where the Patch Belongs.

A New Englander recently had occasion to engage a gardener. One morning two applicants appeared—one a decidedly decent looking man, and the other of much less prepossessing appearance and manner.

After very little hesitation, the man of the house chose the latter applicant.

A friend who was present, evinced surprise at the selection, asking:

"Has that man ever worked for you before?"

"No," replied the other; "in fact, I never saw either of them until to-day."

"Then why did you choose the shorter man? The other had a much better face."

"Face!" exclaimed the proprietor of the place, in disgust. "Let me tell you that, when you pick out a gardener, young want to go by his overalls. If they're patched on the knees you want him. If the patch is on the seat of his trousers, you don't."—Success Magazine.

Modernized Version.

"Faugh! I wish you wouldn't run that comb through my mustache!"

"Sir, you are the first man in 10,000 customers that has objected to that comb."

Strenuous.

Mother (returning suddenly)—Gracious, children, what have you been doing? Why, the room looks like a hurricane had struck it and Willie looks like he had been through a thrashing machine!

Tommy—Please, mamma, we have been playing Russian douma and Willie was the czar.

A False Alarm.

"There was a man dropping letters in the new postoffice building last Saturday."

"What! Are they ready to receive mail there?"

"No. This was an English workman and the letters he dropped were all h's."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Historical Fragment.

James Monroe was putting the finishing touches on his famous doctrine. "I've got it hammered into shape at last," he said, "although I know, of course, there will always be somebody knocking it, just the same."

Remembering, however, that the Big Stick was on the side of the doctrine, he allowed his freshly barbered face to wrinkle into the semblance of a smile.

His Fall Share.

"I sometimes think, Brother Hardesty," observed the pastor, who was dining with him, "that a man ought to give one-tenth of his income to the Lord."

"I'm doin' more than that this year, elder," said Deacon Hardesty. "The only thing I'm makin' any money on now is my hens, and I feed mighty near half 'em to the preachers."

Cobalt, Ct.

There's a flag station in Connecticut, U. S. A., called Cobalt. The Pilgrim fathers or their near relatives mined the mineral not wisely nor too well. The mine is still there, but no one works it. Not one man in ten thousand in the United States knows the village of Cobalt, Conn., is on the map; but nine out of ten men in New York city and in every United States town boasting of a live newspaper, knows Cobalt, Ontario, Canada, as well as he knows Butte, Mont.—Toronto World.

RHEUMATISM CAN NOT BE RUBBED AWAY

It is perfectly natural to rub the spot that hurts, and when the muscles, nerves, joints and bones are throbbing and twitching with the pains of Rheumatism the sufferer is apt to turn to the liniment bottle, or some other external application, in an effort to get relief from the disease, by producing counter-irritation on the flesh. Such treatment will quiet the pain temporarily, but can have no direct curative effect on the real disease because it does not reach the blood, where the cause is located. Rheumatism is more than skin deep—it is rooted and grounded in the blood and can only be reached by constitutional treatment—IT CANNOT BE RUBBED AWAY. Rheumatism is due to an excess of uric acid in the blood, brought about by the accumulation in the system of refuse matter which the natural avenues of bodily waste, the Bowels and Kidneys, have failed to carry off. This refuse matter, coming in contact with the different acids of the body, forms uric acid which is absorbed into the blood and distributed to all parts of the body, and Rheumatism gets possession of the system. The aches and pains are only symptoms, and though they may be scattered or relieved for a time by surface treatment, they will reappear at the first exposure to cold or dampness, or after an attack of indigestion or other irregularity. Rheumatism can never be permanently cured while the circulation remains saturated with irritating, pain-producing uric acid poison. The disease will shift from muscle to muscle or joint to joint, settling on the nerves, causing inflammation and swelling and such terrible pains that the nervous system is often shattered, the health undermined, and perhaps the patient becomes deformed and crippled for life. S. S. S. thoroughly cleanses the blood and renovates the circulation by neutralizing the acids and expelling all foreign matter from the system. It warms and invigorates the blood so that instead of a weak, sour stream, constantly depositing acid and corrosive matter in the muscles, nerves, joints and bones, the body is fed and nourished by rich, health-sustaining blood which completely and permanently cures Rheumatism. S. S. S. is composed of both purifying and tonic properties—just what is needed in every case of Rheumatism. It contains no potash, alkali or other mineral ingredient, but is made entirely of purifying, healing extracts and juices of roots, herbs and barks. If you are suffering from Rheumatism do not waste valuable time trying to rub a blood disease away, but begin the use of S. S. S. and write us about your case and our physicians will give you any information or advice desired free of charge and will send our special treatise on Rheumatism.

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