

SERIAL STORY

THE LOVES of the LADY ARABELLA

By MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL

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SYNOPSIS.

At 14 years of age Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw's nephew fell deeply in love at first sight with Lady Arabella Sturmont...

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

No sooner had Giles said this than with the determination to be known as a man of spirit (I was, as I said, but 14), I concluded I would go to London, too.

The divine Sylvia was a delightful actress, I must admit, and in spite of being 40 if she was a day, and though ruddled with pain, she had something winning in her air and face...

Neither Sir Peter nor Polly, as Giles called her, showed any signs whatever of having recognized us in the large crowd in the pit...

A few words passed between master and man, and then we knew that the handsome gentleman was Capt. Philip Overton of the Second Life Guards.

Capt. Overton seated himself quietly, and after a careless glance at the house, seemed to retire into his own thoughts, quite unmindful of the stage and what was going on upon it.

But if Capt. Overton was indifferent to all about him, one person, the young beauty in Lady Hawkshaw's box, was far from indifferent to him.

Lady Arabella saw his entrance, and from that moment she was occupied in trying to obtain his attention. When at last he recognized her and bowed slightly, she flamed all over with color, and gave him as good an invitation as any man might want to come to her box.

As the play progressed, I saw that Giles was becoming more and more infatuated with the fledgling beauty, and he even whispered to me a suggestion that we present ourselves boldly at the door of the box.

One's first night at the play is usually a magic dream, but mine was tempered with the dread of being caught on the spot, of being delayed in our

return to Portsmouth, and the torment of seeing the adored of my heart quite absorbed in another man.



There was Nothing for Me to Do But to Walk Along Beside Him.

When the play was over, we sat still until the Hawkshaw party had passed out, and then, more for the sake of bravado, I think, than inclination, Giles ran pell-mell to the stage door.

"And now, Dicky boy," said Giles to me, "keep a bright lookout for any of our men; and if you see one, cut your cable and run for it, and if we are separated meet me at the White Horse Cellar at 12 o'clock to-night to take the midnight coach."

By the time we had got our dinner, it was time to go to the play. We marched off, and made our way through the mob of footmen, and got seats for the pit; and when we went in, and I saw the playhouse lighted up and the boxes filled with beautiful creatures, I was near beside myself.

I gaped about me until suddenly Giles gripped my arm, and whispered to me: "Don't look to the left. There is a box with Peter Hawkshaw in it, and Polly, and two girls—one of them the greatest beauty I ever saw, though but a slip of a girl. If Peter or Polly sees us, Lord help us!"

I did not look around immediately, but the desire to have a glimpse of the adorable Lady Arabella made me cast a glance that way. She was very beautifully dressed, and though but little more than 16, such a vision of loveliness as fairly to rival reigning beauties of several seasons' standing.

Nor could Giles keep his eyes off Lady Arabella; and I noticed that even when the divine Sylvia, as he called her, was on the stage, he was not strictly attentive to her, but rather sought that fateful box where so much beauty was enthroned.

three of us were huddled together in the porch of a church, some distance away from the scene of the fracas.

"Neatly done," remarked Overton with a smile, to Giles. "I should have been in that brawny fellow's clutches now, but for the clip over the head you gave him."

"You did your share, sir," politely responded Giles.

"But time presses and our affairs must be settled," said Overton; "here is my card. It is too dark to read it, but I am Capt. Philip Overton, of the Second Life Guards."

"And I," replied Giles, "am Midshipman Giles Vernon of the Ajax, ship of the line, now at Portsmouth."

"By the dim light of a lantern in the church porch I saw the expression of astonishment upon Overton's face."

"Then," he stammered, "we are related."

"Yes," replied Giles, smiling, "and if you pierce me through with sword or pistol, it will be worth one of the finest estates in the kingdom to you, provided always that old villain, Sir Thomas Vernon, does not marry and have children in spite of us."

Overton reflected, half laughing and half frowning.

"If only you had not passed a blow! Anything else, though, would be an accommodation for, it was most unfortunate."

"Yes, as it turns out," responded Giles; "but the question is, now, when and where can we meet?"

Just then the great bell of St. Paul's tolled out the half before midnight, and I, who had been an almost unobserved listener, spoke out of the fullness of my heart.

"Giles," said I, "the coach leaves at 12. If we do not get to Portsmouth in time, we are deserters. Let Capt. Overton write to you and fight afterward."

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings comes wisdom," replied Overton, smiling; and so in two minutes it was settled, Overton agreeing to come to Portsmouth to fight, if Giles could not get leave to meet him half-way between Portsmouth and London.

"We traveled all night, Giles sleeping soundly and snoring very loud, in one corner. I felt great uneasiness about the coming meeting between him and Overton, although I believed there was no hostile feeling between them. But when two men face each other with arms in their hands, there is always the possibility of awful catastrophe."

The roseate morning broke when we were still some distance from Portsmouth. The sight of the blooming hedge-rows, the bird-sons, and all the fair beauty of the morning made me long to be outside, and at the last stage—my companion still sleeping—I got out, and with a shilling to the coachman, got the box seat. There were only two or three persons, besides the guard, on the coach.

Once up there, I could not rest satisfied without handling the ribbons. I had never even driven a donkey in my life, but, nevertheless, I aspired to drive four fresh roadsters. The coachman, a good-natured, foolish fellow, gave me the reins, down a perfectly smooth lane. I seized the whip, too, and brought it down across the wheelers' backs, and the next thing I knew, the coach was lying on its side on the road, and I was on the ground.

It was over in a wink, and it seemed scarcely longer before it had been righted; for the load was extremely light, and no one was hurt except Giles. He scrambled out of the coach window, his arm hanging down, not broken, but out of joint. I pointed to it.

"Your sword arm," I said. There was nothing for it but to make for Portsmouth as fast as possible. Giles was in extreme pain; he said nothing, but great drops came out upon his forehead. When we reached the town, I at once put off in search of a surgeon, while Giles remained at the inn. I soon fetched the surgeon, who got the arm into place. When the man had finished, Giles asked when he could use his arm for pistol shooting.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

POPULAR AUTHORS.

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Bent on an errand of mercy, a city prowler made his way into a strange neighborhood. What impressed him most was the bookstore windows. In every one for blocks around were stacks of a new book he had never heard of by a writer of whom he had never heard.

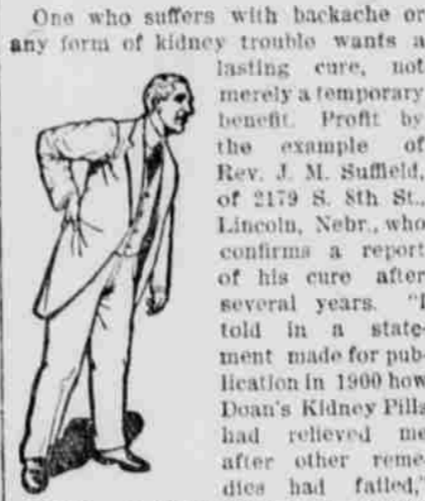
"Who is this man?" he finally asked. "Why is he so popular hereabouts?" "He is the pastor of the Presbyterian church down in the next block," said the stationer. "Every bookseller in the neighborhood is making a specialty of his book. That is the usual way of doing things when a clergyman brings out a new book. Anybody else might appear in the publishers' catalogue every month without arousing local pride, but with the preacher it is different. When a minister turns author that old saw about the prophet being without honor in his own country is disproved with a vengeance. Every spring there is a considerable literary output by the pastors of New York churches. The first place where these volumes are put on sale is the bookstores near the church where the minister preaches, and usually the largest sales are made there."

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