

A FATAL WEDDING.



By Lottie Braham.

delayed Lord Elsdale's horses on their road from the castle, and it was but a short quarter of an hour that Barbara Hutton had been detained at Stourton Station, yet that trifling accident and the short delay it caused changed her whole life in the time to come.

CHAPTER VI.

For two years Lord Elsdale and his niece had traveled in foreign lands, and at the end of that time they had returned to England. Miss Hutton had been presented, and had made her debut in the great world of rank and fashion, where she had at once taken her place as a queen of beauty, and received as much homage and admiration as even she could wish.

The touch of mystery surrounding her early life added to Barbara Hutton's success in society. Thus the girl was received with open arms in London society; and in her triumphs she forgot that these things had not been always hers. That she, Lord Elsdale's heiress, clad in purple and fine linen, should have once owed her daily bread to charity was a thought that, when it came to her—which was but rarely—made her cheeks burn like fire, and the heavy black lashes droop over the proud dark eyes. And yet the thought had been with her during the past night, and in the darkness she had hidden her face in the embrace and lace of her pillows, ashamed to her inmost soul of the base disparity of which she felt herself guilty.

The shamed thought had lingered with her during her toilet that morning, and it had made her even more distant than was her wont to her maid as she dressed her; and through all her reserve she had vaguely wondered what the woman would say if she knew that her mistress was the child of a provincial actress—such a woman perhaps as the painted women she had seen at Stourton Station on the preceding day.

But in the stately old hall, surrounded by so many signs of greatness and wealth, these thoughts vanished; all her old disdain and her returned, the pretty head was raised even more proudly than usual as she stood at the foot of the great staircase in her white gown, the old Flemish lace at her neck stirred by the quickened beating of her heart.

As she stood in the subdued light of the great hall—upon the marble floor of which, here and there, large bear-skin rugs were thrown—subdued even on a summer sunlit day, and almost somber now that the skies without were lowering and overcast, her uncle's secretary came toward her.

"His lordship will be engaged until mid-day," he said, speaking with the slight constraint which was always noticeable in his manner to his employer's beautiful niece; "but he wished me to say that Mrs. Fairfax will attend you, if you care to go over the castle."

"Thank you; I will send for her," Miss Hutton returned, quietly.

Mrs. Fairfax, with admiration expressing itself in every glance of her kindly eyes, on every feature of her homely face, was delighted to be the first to introduce Miss Hutton to the beauties of her old home. From the great hall they passed the drawing room, with its silver moldings and matze-satin hangings and the priceless treasures of art in its cabinets, and next into the dining room, with its antique gold and silver plate and Limoges bowls and dishes, and the many lesser sitting rooms and boudoirs; and then they went up to the picture gallery, hung with dead-and-gone Huttons, whose eyes seemed to follow the beautiful girl who moved slowly down between them, pausing here and there as some pictured face struck her.

And she paused and lingered before the portrait of a fair-haired, gray-eyed girl child in the shining satin and blue lace of her wedding dress.

"How beautiful!" Barbara exclaimed eagerly, and Mrs. Fairfax gave her a kindly glance as she told her that the portrait was that of the present earl's first wife, who had died at her son's birth.

"It must have been a terrible blow to Uncle Norman," Barbara observed.

"His lordship never really recovered from it, Miss Barbara," Mrs. Fairfax said, somewhat tremulously. "For many years the sight of the poor young lord was unbearable to him. Indeed I sometimes think that he never felt like a father to him until they brought him home dead."

"Ah, that was terrible!" said Barbara, with a catch in her breath. "The next with an accident, did he not?"

"He was killed in a railway accident, Miss Hutton."

"Will you tell me about it, Mrs. Fairfax? I know so little of the family history. Is it true that he and my uncle were not on very good terms just then?"

"It is true, I am sorry to say, Miss Barbara."

"And was the cause of the quarrel a girl in the village?"

"I have understood so, Miss Barbara."

"Who was she?"

between them in the hall, and she had almost the young lord come into my sitting room, and said that he was going away, and wished me goodbye. He looked very pale, poor lad—I held him in my arms when he was an infant, Miss Barbara, and loved him as I might have done a son of my own—and his voice sounded rather husky. I asked him when he was coming back, and he laughed in a sad kind of way, and said he did not know; and the next day, Miss Barbara, they brought him home dead—crushed out of all recognition—I myself would not have recognized him."

"Whose picture hung there, Mrs. Fairfax?" Barbara asked, pointing to the empty panel.

"The earl's eldest son, Miss Barbara."

"Where is it now?" Barbara queried, curious to see what manner of man it was who had deemed the world well lost for the sake of a low born woman's love.

"It hangs in the boudoir where her ladyship always sat, Miss Barbara. No one enters the room but his lordship and myself. Everything has been left as it was thirty years ago."

The musing gravity in Barbara's dark eyes deepened. It seemed so strange to her that her proud, cold uncle should hide in his heart such a pretty, tender romance as this.

CHAPTER VII.

"You quite understand me, Barbara?" "I cannot fail to do so, Uncle Norman; you have been sufficiently explicit."

Both voices were young, but perhaps of the two Barbara's was the prouder as she stood opposite to the earl in the library at the castle.

It was late autumn; the earl's reading lamp was burning on his writing table, and the blazing wood fire on the hearth was throwing a ruddy glare over the room, with its carved bookcases and great chairs upholstered in embossed velvet, and upon the tawny folds of Barbara's tea gown as she stood, her charming dark head held laughingly erect, but with her dark lashes downcast, hiding her proud, angry eyes. Lord Elsdale's displeased face softened as he looked at her—at the beautiful girl who had brought back to him some of his own youth and hope.

"Then I need not detain you from your guests," he said, seating himself at his table. "Perhaps I have already trespassed too much upon your time."

"I have been here exactly fifteen minutes," the young girl responded, quietly; "and my guests—those of them who are not asleep—can amuse themselves without me. Before I return to them, Uncle Norman, will you not show me the letter of which you have just spoken?"

"To what end?" he asked, glancing up at her. "You will remember that, when I decided to return to England, I feared that this would happen—that, hearing of your residence here, they would endeavor to renew their old acquaintance with you, and—"

"You cannot tell that they have done so," she interrupted.

"What else can be desired by the letter which Mr. Sinclair fortunately gave to me instead—"

"Mr. Sinclair has taken a great liberty."

"By fulfilling my directions?"

"The letter was addressed to me," Barbara said, faltering a little.

"In a handwriting which he recognized," Lord Elsdale commented.

"How should he recognize it?" Barbara asked quickly. "He has never seen it before."

"You are mistaken; I showed it to him, desiring him to notice it."

"But—Barbara's dark eyes went quickly to his face—"you have held no communication with—"

The earl averted his angry eyes ere he answered.

"Pardon me," he said coldly—"one communication passed between us. I sent Mr.—Mr.—what is this person's name?—a check, and he returned it to me torn across and— Is anything the matter, Barbara?" he asked suddenly, looking up at her as she uttered a faint little cry. "Are you ill? Shall I send for your maid or for Mrs. Fairfax?"

"You sent him a check?" the girl gasped, with quivering lips.

"Certainly—why not? Did you think I was willing to let him to let you lie under such an obligation to a low-born actor? He returned it, and I shall not readily forget that insult."

"Of course he returned it," Barbara cried, bitterly, her face death-like in its pallor. "The debt I owed him was one no amount of money could repay. Did you not feel shame in offering it? The insult was yours, not his, Uncle Norman."

"You speak foolishly, and in error," he rejoined, with chill displeasure. "The difference in our positions is so wide—"

"That it might have made me more considerate," she broke in passionately. "Avatar as he is, he is a true gentleman, Uncle Norman. Let me have the letter, Uncle Norman; they may be ill—or in trouble; and—they were so good—so good to me."

She held out her hands to him in eager entreaty, her face beautiful in its pleading and agitation. She was not all heartless; this lovely girl who had so easily learned a lesson of worldliness and ambition.

As the earl hesitated, glancing from her to the letter in his hand, she went on earnestly.

"I have obeyed you only too well until now, Uncle Norman. I have put my meat away so easily that the thought of it makes me ashamed of myself; I have given them scarcely a thought for all their love and care; and that they write at all, believing me to be the base thing I am, must show how good and forgiving they are."

"This is childish, my dear Barbara," the earl said, in a vexed tone. "I hoped that in your position—you will attain a prouder position ere long—you would learn the folly of such weakness. Keith would—"

"Despite me thoroughly if he knew the truth," she broke in bitterly. "Selfish, base ingratitude is hardly a quality to be desired in a wife, if he has any thought of making me such."

"Any thought?" the earl echoed. "You are speaking wildly, Barbara. It is now three weeks since Everett asked my permission to pay his addresses to you. If he has not spoken to you, it is simply because you give him no opportunity, not because he is hesitating about that which might make other men hesitate."

Barbara glanced at his, her color changing.

"You have told him?" she queried faintly.

"Yes, I have told him—I told him when he spoke to me, Barbara. I congratulate you heartily on the love you have won."

As he spoke, he stretched out his hand, and she took it, and he held it for a moment, and she looked into his eyes, and she saw that he was not speaking in jest.

She felt that she was not speaking in jest.

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APRONS IN FASHION.

MOST UP-TO-DATE OVERDRESSES RESEMBLE THEM.

The Redingote in House Gowns Is an Unfailing Sign of Newness—Some Fashionable and Very Expensive Costumes that May Be Imitated.

New York correspondence:

Y current standards in dress, many a woman is tricked out in her best when the front of her is covered by an apron. That doesn't mean that she wears some delicate bit of muslin and needlework, for the stylish apron is not an accessory, but part of the gown. All sorts of dresses have them, from the beautiful gown showing a double apron of velvet dipping front and back, and seeming to hold down an avalanche of cascading frills of light material that completes the skirt, to something really domestic looking. On the latter order was this first pictured gown, though it, too, was a dress-up, its pretense at domesticity being the shallow sort that really is unsuited to household duties on the personally conducted plan. Its apron likeness disappeared, too, when viewed from the opposite side, where the skirt was without a panel. The bodice and underskirt of this gown were the warm brilliant red so much indulged in just now, strapped with bands of a red shade darker. The revers turning away to show the yoke were faced with a lovely shade of pinkish gray, to match the gray overskirt, whose chief beauty was in simplicity of fold and delicacy of color and material.

It is frequently when the overdress



THE LIKE MUST BE NEW.

must either be properly "built out" or possess prettily curved hips. The extreme severity of the side line is broken by that clever extension upon the redingote, of the wide collar which is a part of the front of the bodice. Gray ladies' cloth made this princess poisonise of the gown pictured, pretty old-fashioned striped broad-lace showing stripes of flower-bred lavender on white ground giving the under dress. All the neck fixings were white. The redingote was not lined, the seams being strapped on the inside. That is a new notion, and it becomes the cloth is supposed to hold more closely about the hips if not lined. There is a great saving

in expense by doing without lining, but there is a loss in picturesqueness.

Women should remember that it is time to consider the purse when they are ready to make purchases. When "looking" (the word is quoted to convey the meaning confirmed shoppers give it, look only at the best models, no woman needs to use velvet, thread lace, ermine and double-faced satin in carrying out her dress, but she is almost sure of exclusive styles if she studies models in these rich goods. A group of such elegant costumes makes up to-day's concluding picture, and they should be instructive even to women whose year's supply of pin money would not buy the least expensive of them. The first was biscuit colored velvet, a skirt of white satin corded in silver showing under the silver embroidered vandykes of the velvet. The fur lined cloak was velvet to match the dress, its trimming being white satin ribbon. White satin ribbon and flowers made the pretty bodice fastening, and the yoke matched the satin edge skirt.

Striped broadcloth and fur, both necessitating great outlay, were combined in the next gown in this row. Read any admired sewing and knit-pleated black chiffon, and the cost becomes reasonable, while the model is right of the reel, and to be seen elsewhere only in materials as expensive as those first mentioned.

An entire gown of silk velvet means a hard rap at someone's purse, and also means that there must be an extensive wardrobe back of it. The gown pictured was royal violet velvet, collar and yoke thread lace on satin. A cloth gown of the same color with handsome braiding on the satin would be very attractive.

When it comes to planning fur trimmings, it is a case with most girls of desiring to make a little fur go a good ways. The model remaining in the illustrations is attractive for this reason. It was carried out in brown cloth and sable, but the amount of fur does not need to be so great, even if the high collar were to be attached, which it need not be. Its fur waistcoat, over which the scalloped cloth edges were snugly drawn, was very novel and pretty, and the lace finish over the fur quite correct.

It should be noticed that not a skirt of those shown here has the fitted sounce recently so abundant. Nor will there be one among next spring's careful dressers. It's a sudden death, due to too great popularity.

Copyright, 1908.

William J. Bennett, a wealthy man residing in one of the fashionable quarters of Brooklyn, has been having so many quarrels with his neighbors that he has moved out. For revenge he advertises his fine house to let to a colored family only, with "the more children the better." He has so far refused all offers from white people who have wanted to rent the house.

The eight-hour rule has been introduced lately in the Russian postal system.

Editor—I'm holding it. Every little while lately I get to thinking that we are not getting out as good a paper as we ought to, and then I take that poem and see how much worse that sheet might be, and that makes me cheerful again. Say, how much'll you take for Chicago News.

Serving a Good Purpose. Caller—I sent you a poem about three weeks ago. What have you done with it?

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SIMPLE YET STRONG IN INDIVIDUALITY.