

## THE SEVENTH MARCHIONESS OF RIVIÈRE.

(Continued from page 136.)

"THE LOVER OF THE SOUL REMAINS ITS LOVER THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, IN AS MUCH AS HE HAS UNITED HIMSELF TO THAT WHICH IS EVERLASTING."

On the following morning the Marquess of Rivière stood for quite a while with this letter in his hand before he opened it. An envelope boldly inscribed and symmetrically sealed. Surely it was not possible that two hands could form letters so identical.

Then he broke the seal and glanced over the page at the crabbed signature—Edward Leroy.

"Fool," he said aloud. Nevertheless he slipped the letter into his pocket-book, after comparing the writing with one already there, unstamped, and addressed to his lady mother.

He caught the censorious eye of his Scotch terrier.

"Well! old lady?" he questioned.

"Yap—yap," she snapped at him.

"Burn them both you say? Ah! there spoke jealousy—or you would know that fuel added to fire makes furnace. The letter says 'any day.' Therefore we will go and see our philosopher to-day. With all your wisdom do you know that to-morrow may never be? You do not believe that? Did you mention Elysian Fields, where little dogs may find freedom for ever and ever? No! Well, if I were a vain person I should interpret the language of your eyes to say: 'You are my to-morrow, and my Elysian Fields.' May I not also have something to worship?"

But this astute canine companion was far too wise to argue with her master when in such a whimsical mood—so she hopped into her basket, and wondered why he let his breakfast get cold.

When Andrea contradicted the philosopher she did it in quite a smiling and chirpy way which apparently gave no offence. Indeed he appeared to enjoy it, and with her flouting of convention he was entirely in sympathy.

Not so Mrs. Leroy. Chaperons were still on the *qui vive* when Andrea was twenty—and for a young girl to wander about London alone—or even to be seen in a hansom cab—was considered the height of impropriety. It classed her with the "Girl of the Period."

"But how can a live girl be otherwise?" asked Andrea, in her logical way.

To this Mrs. Leroy objected. "You see," she explained, "she wears a pork-pie hat, and very high heels, and very short petticoats, is altogether fast and conspicuous, and kicks over the traces generally."

"But Andrea does none of these things," interposed the philosopher.

"No, but if it is said she does—that is even worse," his wife answered. "Girls cannot be too careful."

"Of what?" snapped the recluse.

Then up jumped Andrea.

"Dear people, don't argue about me," she laughed. "How can I study if I don't come in contact with humans, books don't really count—no one molests me, why should they?"

"Now Andrea," began Mrs. Leroy, "you know you are a most attractive creature, the way you wear your clothes—the—"

"I attract all I can," confessed Andrea, truthfully. "I just love to. It is such a help when you want to do things. You have no idea how many friends I have made around here."

"Friends!" exclaimed Mrs. Leroy.

"Oh! wonderful people—they all live round about—dodging in and out of horrid holes and corners—close here to these lovely parks and palaces. All hungry, dirty, diseased—but really beautiful people—who share crusts and drinks and pity one another. Mentor, put down your pen—and let me tell you of real things."

"Facts accurately annotated are the only real things," spoke the pedant.

"Oh, la-la, pitch them all on the fire-back," cried Mrs. Leroy impatiently.

"You cannot burn facts, my dear," answered her husband reprovingly.

"Oh! Surely when accurately annotated," laughed Andrea.

"The fact remains," pronounced the philosopher sententiously.

"That some day these hungry people will come and upset all your statistics," she flung back at him—as she disappeared from the room.

She had glanced at the clock—it was on the stroke of five.

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Mrs. Leroy's boudoir was a charming room—oval in shape—restful in tone—always gay with flowers. The windows faced west, and the pale setting sun was smiling in as Andrea slipped within the curtains.

"Good-night, lovely light," she murmured, kissing her finger-tips to it.

Wistfully she watched the fading of the light. She thought of the poor friends she had picked up in the streets, some of whom lived for a lifetime in darkness. Away to the right she could hear the murmur of the traffic in Piccadilly, the faint skimming of the hansoms, guided by the finest drivers in the world, the roar of the lumbering 'busses, tooled along by men most cheery, on whom she delighted to whet her wit.

Against the grimy wall, which enshrined the ducal House of Devonshire would be leaning a shattered man, his tragic face, with its sightless eyes, upturned in broken-hearted appeal. She was quite sure of the heart-break; did he not forget to beg? At the other corner of the wall a scorbatic hob-goblin of a man—also cut off from light—ran to and fro, thrusting to notice a dirty tin pannikin, and demanding pence at the peril of your soul! A repulsive, little rogue—yet, for that, the more pitiable.

To the left the Mall was already fluttering to life, through a veil of tender green. Here, too,

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