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By Anna Katharine Green,

Author of "The Lodger," "Etc."

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

NEW LEADS.

As Mr. DeGraw rushed from Miss Rogers' presence a woman was passing through the hall against whom he in advertently ran. Shocked at his indecency he drew back, surprised with a start, as the woman he had just and mechanically stretched forth his arms to catch her. But she, without noticing this assumes of his mannerly words of apology hastened up stairs, and so he had no excuse for following her he could only vent his doubts and fears in the exclamation:

"Is it the Portuguese?" I am sure it is the Portuguese! She is disguised; she is well dressed, and looks like an respectable working woman. I know her well and cannot be deceived in the shape of her shoulders."

She was going up to Miss Rogers' rooms. She had evidently come from the street for she wore a bonnet and a long cloak, and she went up with an assured and unconcerned step like one familiar with the way.

"My darling!" thought he, "you darling already under the paws of this wretched knowing cat?"

A servant girl coming along at his moment he stopped her.

"Who is that woman who is just going up?" he asked.

"That is Miss Rogers' hairdresser, the girl remained in evident surprise. "She comes every day to arrange Miss Rogers' hair for the evening."

He stood silent, mortified and perplexed. Could he have been mistaken? He was not ready to think that.

"Is this woman's foreignness?" he inquired again.

"She speaks English, was she rather mistakingly dressed?"

The Portuguese did not in either pretended that she could not. Was he ignorant? He looked toward the parlour door and hesitated. Never in his life before had he known what it really was to struggle with an overwhelming impulse. To leave the signatures with this dame in his mind seemed impossible, but to go back? He dared not do that, for it would certainly bring defeat to his purpose. No he must trust this master to the paler, he could not meddle with himself, but—

He took himself off, he rushed out of the room and went hurriedly to the scented of Mr. Byrd.

Then DeGraw received this intelligence with an expression of mingled surprise and satisfaction.

"We have been searching for the Portuguese," said he, "but never thought of looking for her in Miss Rogers' rooms. She has disguised you say."

"Admitting, of the woman I saw is true. Her impudence is unexcused, and in my present dress she looks quite responsible. But I had not been in a very sensitive condition. I do not think I should have had a doubt concerning her. It was the smiling, coqueting of her eyes that made me look at her."

"And this woman, however, is not to be trifled with. She is a dangerous woman, and when she knows that the men she has chosen are easily taken in, she is bound to play her cards right. Turn her back upon her, and she has the cloth dress strained to her back, and her decision is made."

But just at this moment a knock was heard at the door, and she flings the dress on the bed and stands palpitating like a狂怒的女魔. It's only the hairdresser who comes every day, but her presence is an unmistakable sign of the young mistress' arrival, and the young mistress shows it by the loss of her beauty colour which had but a moment before tinted her cheek with roses. Turning her back upon both dresses she looks the mistress and mistress's to take her aggression by the throat ever so gently, but she is wearing the ticks of her long life.

But the next moment she is holding an impress and drops the earring to her breasts. Holding her hand to her heart, she says, "I am sorry, but I am a stranger to you, but you must be a stranger to me. You will be welcome to our home, and I hope you will be happy here."

"I hope my goodness will pardon me for my impudence is unexcused, and in my present dress she looks quite responsible. But I had not been in a very sensitive condition. I do not think I should have had a doubt concerning her. It was the smiling, coqueting of her eyes that made me look at her."

"And is that all?"

"Yes. But it is enough. DeGraw makes you look like the matador. He means I shall not sleep till I know whether this—certainly who evidently had daily access to Miss Rogers' is an honest woman or not."

I will go no immediately to the house," he said.

"And you still Portuguese?"

"She shall be looked after."

"Byg, I trust you. You know how much I have at stake and how reasonable I consider my fears. You have yourself said that you thought it possible that the Portuguese would be likely to carry on the schemes of Monteil. If she has lost all hope of making anything out of the heiress she can, at least, show her naked and weak before us. The foreigners are as vicious as we are."

"We will watch her."

"And I may sleep."

"Soundly."

"You are a good fellow, Byrd. I never thought the day would come when it would be a matter of satisfaction to me to have a friend among the police."

Byrd smiled, but somewhat constrainedly. He was evidently not in a mood to laugh at himself. But he did not perceive this; his mind was relaxed and he was almost drowsy. "Small pleasure from you to-night?" he asked.

"Yes. It there is anything to distract you, otherwise not."

"Then I'll go." All right, but tell me one thing this time. This woman is so different in appearance from the Portuguese as to be likely to impress upon Miss Rogers."

I think she was, as she showed a much skill in altering her costume and manners as she did her dress and accessories.

"Do not think it is the Portuguese," asserted the detective. "She would make any effort for mere vengeance. But we will see. She can't decide the issue even if she can be bright eyes or big old menses."

would risk more than wealth to have him always near me."

If she did not say these words she thought them, and her fingers flew and the dress was on, and she should had and in her right mind, looking at her own image in the glass.

"All this is better," she now said, sinking on her knees, nimbed in the attitude of prayer. "I will not regret this; I cannot, whereas—". She threw a mocking glance at the velvet, and rising hung it up in the closet and brought forth her bonnet and gloves. Suddenly her hand flew to her throat. "I have forgotten my talisman," said she.

She went to her drawer, and took out a simple locket. It was the only article of jewelry which her admirer had ever given her wear, and she prepared to clasp it about her neck with an air of satisfaction, when she bathed her self to take a peep at the faded foreground which she had shut within.

But when she opened the locket, she did not find the memorial flower which she had once placed there, but a faded paper. Surprised she drew it out and unfolding it read these words which she realized what her present meant:

"I am not to intrude myself, I can

not forget your wishes or hopes. I am to remember that he loves her and that it is for her happiness to let him. I am to encourage this love, and to lend all my influence toward the preservation of her beauty with every effort of honest virtue which had been hurriedly made during the past week. This is

the most momentous question of her life. That is it momentous, you can discern from the absorbed expression of her face and that she hesitates

squidly evident from the anxiety with which her eye passes from cloth to velvet and from velvet to cloth, as she listens alternately to the suggestions of her heart and the promptings of her ambition.

And the days passed. It was the only article of jewelry which her admirer had ever given her wear, and she prepared to clasp it about her neck with an air of satisfaction, when she bathed her self to take a peep at the faded foreground which she had shut within.

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