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## A MATTER of MILLIONS.

By Anna Katharine Green. Author of "The Forsaken Inn," Etc.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN THE GARDEN.

Miss Appleyard's house in the city was a counterpart of Miss Rogers' mansion. On this occasion it was more than ordinarily brilliant. Lights, flowers and flowering shrubs. In a room where small crowds of richly dressed women, escorted by men in evening dress, were moving to and fro, Miss Rogers with her aunt and two or three ladies received. Miss Appleyard and an elderly female friend who left town the next day, were also present to receive the guests of the occasion, but their duties were merely nominal.

Arriving in the hall, she hesitated a little, then seeing the drawing-room and the crowd to greet it, decided to remove her cloak and go directly to the dressing-room above. With some difficulty she made her way to the stairs and was ascending them when she was accosted by a young man who had been standing in the hall as if waiting for some one.

"Miss Rogers, I believe?" he said, bowing low.

She nodded, and was about to pass on, when he added:

"I have a message for you from Mr. Dykeman. He is detained at the office, but hopes to be with you before the evening is over."

She thanked him and went on, but had not gone far when she heard him say behind her:

"Excuse me, but I think I ought to inform you that Mr. Dykeman has left town. He was called away on business this afternoon."

She turned and looked at him. He was a stranger to her, but his face was kind and his manner that of a gentleman.

"Thank you," she said, and went on.

Reaching the dressing-room, she found it filled with ladies, and was glad to sit down before the mirror and wait for the maid who had been sent for to arrange her hair. She was very tired, and the thought that Mr. Dykeman was not to be present to support her by his strength and sympathy was a disappointment. But she had expected it, and was not surprised. Only she wished she had not come. She felt as if she could not endure the evening.

The maid was long in coming, and she had time to think of many things, among them the message she had received from the gentleman in the hall. Why had he not given it to her himself? Was it because he was ashamed to look her in the face? Or was he afraid of betraying his own knowledge of the contents of the letter he had brought? She could not tell, but the thought that he knew her secret, and was perhaps laughing at her in his sleeve, was very humiliating.

Then she remembered that Mr. Dykeman had left town, and that she would not see him for days, perhaps weeks, and a sense of desolation overwhelmed her. She had counted so much on his presence, on his sympathy, on his strength. Now she must face her fate alone, and the prospect was appalling.

The maid came, and she submitted herself to her hands, but with a heart so heavy that she could scarcely keep back the tears. Her aunt, coming in to see how she was getting on, found her in a state of such evident depression that she was quite alarmed, and begged her to lie down and rest herself before going down-stairs.

But Miss Rogers refused. She had promised to receive with her aunt, and she would not disappoint her. Besides, she was better now, and would be quite herself when she got down-stairs.

Mrs. Appleyard looked relieved, and left the room. Miss Rogers, after a few moments, followed her.

The rooms were filled with a gay throng, and the hostess was kept busy receiving the guests who were arriving in rapid succession. Miss Rogers, standing by her side, was introduced to many, and had to converse with them, but she was conscious of nothing but the fact that Mr. Dykeman was not present, and that she was in a measure alone in the world.

Suddenly she felt a hand on her arm, and looking up, saw Mrs. Bard standing before her. She was in full dress, and looked very handsome, but her face was pale and her eyes had a strained look in them that startled Miss Rogers.

"Can you come with me for a few moments?" she asked. "I have something very important to say to you."

Miss Rogers, surprised, but not alarmed, for she had no fear of Mrs. Bard, followed her to a small room at the back of the house, and sat down in the chair she placed for her.

"I have come to you," began Mrs. Bard, "because I have just received a letter from Mr. Dykeman, and I do not know what to do. He says that he has left town on business, and will be absent for several days, but that he has received information which makes it necessary that you should be warned at once. He says that Mr. Hamilton Degraw has returned to the city, and that he is making inquiries about you. He has found out that you are living with me, and that you are known as Miss Rogers. He says that he has also found out that you are the daughter of Mr. Hilary Rogers, who died in Paris a few months ago, and that he is trying to find your mother. He says that he has reason to believe that she is living in this city, and that he is trying to find her