

Love Goes Adventuring In—
PARADISE COSMO HAMILTON
 Author of "SCANDAL" and "BLINDNESS OF VIRTUE"
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SYNOPSIS

At the close of a gay Convent Garden Ball box party given by Lady George Cornish and her husband Lumley, Teddy Sherwood attacks Tony Fortescue, disinherited scion of a noble family, because the latter unthinkingly monopolized the society of Christie Buxwing. It is a case of love at first sight with the adoring couple. Sherwood is worsted in the fray by Fortescue who is not really a blackguard but a throwback to the days of his swashbuckling ancestors. Sherwood falling strikes his head. Tony and Christie take him home. He is still angry and demands an explanation.

"Oh, so you're the latest, are you? You're the new one to kneel down and kiss the boots of this damned humbug. You're all the same, the lot of you. You put up barbed wire and virtuous notices against the decent people you come across, but let a wily skunk sneak in with a moving-picture profile and down go your defences and you hand yourself away. God, it makes me sick!"



"Oh, so you're the latest, are you? You're the new one to kneel and kiss the boots of this damned humbug."

The smooth-footed presence of Beppo with a tablecloth brought the argument to a stop for a moment. Accustomed to seeing strange people in that room at all hours of the day and night, his childlike, expressive face showed no surprise at the sight of a girl in the costume of the ballet and the familiar Tony in the decadent garments of a Dulac illustration. Nor was he in the smallest degree upset because his master's head was bandaged. It all belonged to what he called life, and it appealed to the natural passion for dramatics that plays so strong a part in Italian psychology.

"I don't know what you mean by all that, Teddy," she said quietly, "and it don't seem to me to be any use to make another scene. It's very simple, all of it. I'm just as sorry as Tony is for spoiling your evening, but it's as much my fault as his. All those hours were like a minute to me too, because just the same thing happened to me as happened to him."

"I know that. You're only telling me what I told you."

"Yes," replied Christie, watching every word with the greatest care, in order to try and live up to Tony's wonderful flow. "But with this difference."

"What difference?"

"You think Tony went nutty about me as he's been nutty about other girls."

"So would you, if you knew anything about him."

"No. You're wrong there, too. You won't let yourself understand what I mean when I say that this was meant."

"Meant?" The word completely floored him.

"Yes. It was marked out to come, and it would have come just the same if I hadn't gone with you to the ball. Tony and I had to meet tonight, we had to, and we should have done it at the corner of a street, in a chemist's shop, any old place."

Sherwood shot out a scornful and incredulous guffaw.

"And having met"—a rising emotion put her off her grammatical guard—"we're not going to cut loose again never in our lives. See? It's me and him against the blooming world!"

She left her nurse's place at the head of the sofa, and with a dignity and finality that proved to poor old Teddy that his hopes were dead, placed her head on Tony's chest and closed her eyes in peace.

"How touching," he said, with the best attempt at sarcasm of which he was capable. "If I had a camera handy, you'd make a beautiful photograph of love's young dream. But unless Tony's the monkey the managers asked you to find, how do you think you're going to set up a house for your domestic bliss? Is he going to pinch one when nobody's looking, or are you both coming to live on me?"

The entrance of Beppo again, this time with a large tray of cups and plates, spoiled the effect of the heavy insults with which Sherwood had hoped to draw blood. It is more than probable that he would have been rewarded with a smile. There was genuine humour in the last suggestion.

As it was, Christie drifted to the window over which the blinds were drawn, and Tony strolled casually to the table on which there was the familiar cigarette box and helped himself.

"And as to all this fatalistic muck that you're trying to hide behind," continued the unscientific fighter, as soon as Beppo had gone, "it doesn't go down with me. If you were frank and were to tell me that you were mesmerized, I might believe you, Christie. That blighter has mesmerized me often enough for money and food and roof. And if you were to say that you're going off the straight because of the suffering you've had and are going to chuck yourself away on any woman's man in a violent reaction, I might even believe you there. But this piffle about 'having to meet' and being together 'against the world'—What do you take me for?"

"These cigarettes are a little too dry, old boy," said Tony, endeavouring to change a perfectly useless conversation. "There's a little man in Jermyn Street—"

"Oh, shut up," cried Teddy. "You're not going to put me off like that. You may not know it, and it wouldn't matter to you if you did, but Christie's my friend. I've been her slave and bottle-washer for the last six months, and you're not going to get away with this high-handed condescending as lightly as you think. It's all in a day's work for you, this sort of thing. You've only to bat your eyes at a woman to take her from any man she's with. But I'm going to fight to save Christie from you as long as there's one damn bit of truth left in me. She's worth it."

"I agree with you there," said Tony. "Fight to the last gasp. I like you for it."

Sherwood sat up straight, swung round, and put his feet on the floor. The towel had slipped a little over his left ear. His collarless shirt from which the studs had been taken gaped as dress shirts will. He cut a strange figure in that prosaic room. "I love this girl," he cried out, with a depth of feeling that made his voice unsteady. "I'd sell my soul for her. Unlike you, who will drop her in a week, I've asked her to be my wife, over and over again. And unlike you, who live by the skin of your teeth, in a position to make her happy and comfortable, give her a house in the country if she'd like it, with a car and a maid and dogs to walk with, and settle my business on her to win a smile. Have you asked her to be your wife? Have you? You bet you haven't. You think that just because you call yourself the Honourable Anthony Stirling-Fortescue—and precious few people believe you are—that you can take what you want and ride loftily over all the rest of us. But if, before Christie goes any further, she'll take the trouble to look up your record at Bow Street, she'll probably find that you're as common a man as I am and without as honest a father. I ask her to do it, that's all. I ask her to remain uncharmed long enough to make enquiries, to be the 'hands-off' Christie queries, to be the 'hands-off' Christie queries, to be the 'hands-off' Christie queries, to be the 'hands-off' Christie queries. That's fair, and I deserve that. Don't I? Come, don't I? Both of you?"

And he flung out his arms in a sort of pathetic appeal, unaware of the fact that tears were streaming down his face. And then, taking advantage of Tony's utter speechlessness, he sprang to his feet, went unsteadily to Christie and seized her by the wrist. "Own up, go on, own up. You haven't any more true idea who this man is than I have, have you? And he hasn't asked you to be his wife and he never come anywhere near it, has he? Say it. Say it."

"No, he hasn't," said Christie quietly. "And I never expected him to."

"What!—You never expected him to? You—who have been through all the cities with verbiage on your back?"

"This is different, Teddy," she said, "I've tried to tell you so."

Sherwood was not a man of loose ideas, although he had chosen to live among people who regarded morals as out of date. He believed in marriage. He had a hard word for women who went in for free love. And for Christie to fall from her pedestal—Christie, who for all her beauty had slipped through the sordid streets, semi-starvation, and the utter carelessness of the stage, who had refused to marry him—

"He's poisoned you," he cried in horror. "You good-looking irresistible devil, you've poisoned her." And with the utmost desperation he turned to Tony, once more tried to hit him in the face, caught an uncertain foot in the carpet and lurched into his arms.

(To Be Continued)

CHARLOTTE IS CHOSEN BY THE MOOSE LODGE

Queen City Wins Over Asheville and Gastonia.—Shuford Is President. Hickory, Sept. 6.—Selecting Charlotte as the 1927 convention city, the North Carolina Moose Labor Day association adjourned the first annual meeting here early tonight and entered in the Mooseheart legion frolic which included the public initiation of 90 legionnaires. Other cities extending invitations for the convention on next Labor day were Asheville and Gastonia.

E. W. Sanford, of Hickory state Moose secretary for the past year, was elected president of the association. W. C. Moreland, of Asheville, was re-elected vice-president, and W. B. Stuart, of Charlotte, who headed the association the past year, was elected secretary, other officers elected were, Judge D. H. Collins, of Greensboro, treasurer; C. M. Heilig,

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THREE SERIOUS AUTO CRASHES NEAR NEWTON

Ladies in One of the Wrecked Cars Apparently Escaped Without Injury.

Newton, Sept. 6.—Three automobile accidents of a serious nature happened near Newton last night and early this morning, each in a different direction from town. The first was in the Vartown section, about two miles west of Newton, when three negroes in a Ford, apparently drunk, ran into Walter Clark, a young white man of Newton. Both cars were badly damaged. One occupant in the negroes' car, Malt Mullins, was injured. He received several painful bruises about the face and head.

Later on, about 12 o'clock two Ford cars had a head-on collision near Maiden, on the Newton-Lincolnton highway. Both cars were complete wrecks. One was a coupe driven by Lee Rainey, of Lenoir, accompanied by two ladies, and was headed in that direction. The other was an old Ford touring car and was occupied by four or five young men. One of the men is said to have lost an eye in the crash. Two bottles of whiskey and a lady's hat was picked up near the wreck. The names of the men in the touring car have not been learned. The driver stated that he was nearly asleep when the cars

The pennant winner in the Mid-Atlantic League will have to beat out Johnston, which capped the honors in the first half.

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WILL USE 36 TRUCKS IN IREDELL SCHOOLS

Cost of Operation Has Been Reduced to Four Cents Per Pupil Per Day in County.

Statesville, Sept. 6.—Thirty-six trucks will be used to transport the children of the rural schools of Iredele county this year, states Miss Celeste Henkel, county superintendent of schools. Twenty-six school trucks were in use last year and 19 the year before. Last year, 1,395 children in Iredele were transported in school trucks, and during the coming year between four and five hundred will be added to that number.

Each truck is driven by a dependable school boy who has stood an examination and received special instruction in the operation and care of the truck. During the past year a full-time mechanic was employed by the Iredele county school and the cost of operation was reduced to 4 cents per pupil per day, the county superintendent states.

England boasts of two first-class cricket teams that are composed entirely of authors and poets.

An ice cream company in Louisville signaled the opening of its new plant by giving away ten thousand gallons of ice cream.

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