

LOLA CRAWSHAY.

By A. W. Marchmont, B. A.

Continued from 1st Page.

"What do you want with me?" she asked impatiently. "I am troubling you, I see. I am sorry," he said, hitting his white, thin hands and shrugging his shoulders, while out of his blue eyes she caught a sharp, swift glance that almost startled her with its keenness and told her he was acting and reading to lead the effect upon her. She tried to look as stupid and impassive as possible.

"I really don't care whether the violin has 4 or 5 or 50 strings," she answered as if crossly, but really interested now. "That seems to me inconceivable, absolutely impossible. If I had a fifth string," he began to speak with rapid energy, as though the subject carried him away—"I could produce a note from the side of which the mightiest effort of the grandest master would be but as the scraping of a learner. I could—but what am I doing? I am an enthusiast; you are interested. I apologize. Pray forgive me."

Beryl bowed very slightly and looked weary and impatient. "I did not want to talk of my work or my project either," he said, resuming. "It is only incidental, though I am so full of it that, like a hen that has laid an egg, I must cackle of it. But, alas, right in the middle of a path stands a difficulty. I am rich in my art, wealthy in my love of my instrument, but poor in my pocket. To storm the world with a musical treatise for a weapon is impossible to the man without means. I am seeking the means."

"Yes, what is the cost of adding a fifth string to a fiddle?" asked Beryl, stupidly. "I thought they were cheap." He glanced sharply at her to see if she were laughing at him, but the cold, impassive, uninterested expression of her face reassured him.

"It is not the cost of the string I am seeking," he said, "but the agents who will take from me the inspiration and help me to proclaim my idea to the world." "I am afraid," began Beryl, but he stopped her with a wave of the hand. "You cannot help me, you would say, but you can, I think and I hope—not yourself, not yourself. Please listen. I have in many parts of the world people who have studied under me. It is them I am seeking, to gather them into a company, to touch them with the fire that burns in me and bind them into a band who shall proclaim everywhere what I wish. Among them I had once



The man started back in his chair, an English young lady with cool, fire, enthusiasm, and it is her I am now seeking. He spoke with much lively gesticulation.

"Excuse me if I say this is nothing to me," said Beryl, stolidly when he paused. "It is a subject I can take no interest whatever in."

"I am ashamed. I have taken your time without a shadow of reason. I have finished now. I have reasons to know that the young lady had some associations here and that at one time you knew her. She is Miss Crawshaw—Miss Lola Crawshaw."

"This was what he wanted," thought Beryl, with rapid intuition, "and he had wandered through the maze of his silly story to get at this."

"She did not even let her visitor see that she was surprised." "I have a friend of that name," she said, as with caution. "What then?" There was no mistaking the gleam of quick, interested delight which passed over the foreigner's face at this, though he hastened to hide it under the mask of overdone gestures.

"That is good news for my violin!" he exclaimed. "But it can't be the same," said Beryl, with her former air of stolidity. "She doesn't play the fiddle at all."

"No, no; that is right. Her instrument is the piano, but her soul is the soul of the heaven made musician. She lives somewhere here, with a face and a gesture of interrogation, in which hands and arms and shoulders and eyebrows all went up together."

"She is the wife of Sir Jaffray Walcott and is now in America with her husband," answered Beryl in a commonplace, level tone, without a trace of animation in her face.

But she watched with astonishment the effect of the words. The man started back in his chair, all the light air which he had assumed dying instantly away, while in place of the mask which he had been wearing astonishment, disbelief, triumph and white rage played over his face and gleamed in the eyes which stared fixedly at her. For the instant the man's true character showed itself unmistakably to the calm eyes which looked at him from the expressionless, wearied, disinterested face.

The moment afterward he was again the actor, cursing himself for having lost his self control and speculating angrily whether this dull, stupid, conceited English girl had noticed anything. So quickly did his expression change that there seemed to be scarcely a pause before he answered, though in a voice which vibrated with the shock of the surprise.

had Lady Walcott as a pupil there," she replied, as though the point were unimportant. "Oh, no, no, not at all; not there! It was in Paris, Queen Paris, that I had the pleasure. Oh, no, no! That would be ridiculous. Paris is where I have made my fame, such fame as I possess, not Montreal. That is not of the world at all."

He laughed as he said this with the air of one who would laugh out of existence the cobwebs of an absurdity, and the echo of his laugh had not died away when the door closed behind him. Beryl went to another room, the window of which commanded a view of the drive, and, herself unseen, watched him as he walked away slowly like one in thought. Once or twice she turned stealthily and slyly to look back at the house, and the long way from the house she could see on his face the sharp, forcing, gleaming look which had met her once and fastened his handsome, cruel features.

Long after he had disappeared amid the small clump of fir trees which fringed both sides of the drive close to the door of the lodge gates Beryl remained leaning against the window frame looking out, full of the forbidding which the man's visit had roused.

Then, being a practical girl of method, she went to her room and wrote out the interview and added her comments and the impressions which had been caused, and she looked the whole away in her most secret and secure hiding place.

The points which stood out most clearly in her mind were that the foreigner, Pierre Turrian, had some very strong motives for finding Lola; that the tale he told about his musical mission was from start to finish a falsehood; that the fact of the marriage of Lola to Sir Jaffray had moved him beyond all power of self control; that in some way Montreal was mixed up in the matter, and that he had been anxious to learn whether Lola had ever mentioned the name of Turrian to her.

For some days the matter lay like a cloud upon her, and while she was on her visit to her mother she could not dispel it. One incident of that visit served indeed to keep the subject uppermost in her thoughts.

Among the guests was a Frenchman who was a noted amateur violinist, and Beryl, finding him one evening next to her at dinner, asked him whether he knew the name of Turrian as a violin player. "Turrian, Turrian," he repeated, "where is he known?"

"I believe in Paris," answered Beryl. "Ma foi, there is no such player in Paris," was the decided reply. "I may say I know every player of any consequence in the whole of Paris, but there is no such name as Turrian."

"Do you know Montreal?" she asked. "You mean the little Swiss place. I have been there twice, I think, in my rambles. Do you know it—a curious, dull, pretty place, the sort of little town you can look over from north to south and west to east in an hour or two and carry away as a memory photograph?"

"You never heard the name Turrian there as that of a violin player?" asked Beryl. "In Montreal?" And the Frenchman laughed. "Not at all. Poor little Montreal has never distinguished itself yet in producing anything so important as a musician. Wait, wait. What am I saying? And he laughed heartily. "I have forgotten the mad abbe. You know Montreal? No? Then you will not know of this good Abbe d'Evreux?"

"No, I have never heard of him." "May I tell you? The good priest had been no one knows what he had entered the holy church. But, whatever it was, it was something bad, we may be sure. He had picked up a small tangle of music, and he could play the violin, and he played it in such a way as to drive himself out of his wits. Then it was that he conceived a great inspiration—he was to revolutionize the world. And how do you think he was to do it? By adding a fifth string to the violin. Isn't that droll? A fifth string, my faithful poor fellow!"

"The tale well known at Montreal," said Beryl after joining in her companion's expression of amusement. "Why, of course. What would you have? Could it be otherwise? Everyurchin in the gutter has the story off by heart."

"What a most interesting story!" said Beryl, who found much more interest in it than she showed. "It emphasized two points in the tale which the man Turrian had told her. It showed whence he had stolen the idea for his story about the fifth string, and it suggested that his connection with Montreal was at least as close as Beryl had at first concluded."

But it did not hold her for any solution of the chief question as to what was the reason why the man was seeking Lola. It proved that the reason was not what he had said, and that did not carry her far.

It had another effect. Her companion's word had started a thought which afterward developed considerably. As the Frenchman had been speaking of Montreal, Beryl had struck by the idea that it was small place it must be exceedingly easy to find out anything about anybody, and from this it was an easy though gradual development that in such a place she herself could readily learn all the necessary inquiries.

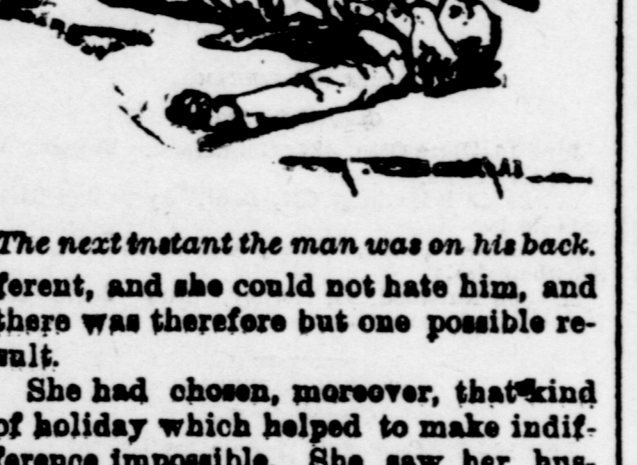
That idea did not come for some time, however, and in the meantime Beryl was troubled to know whether she ought to speak to Sir Jaffray's mother and tell her what she had learned, or to view with Pierre Turrian. There was also the further question as to Lola herself. Ought she to be told? This was a problem over which Beryl spent many hours of thought.

She had married him from motive which were purely worldly and selfish. She had to make a position. She loved ease and luxury. She was not without sense and sentiment, and she chose a husband as a man might choose a profession, because it gave her all that she wanted with the least personal effort and difficulty.

"We women sell ourselves, and she is the shrewdest who fetches the biggest price." Had been one of her favorite opinions, and she was glad that she had been able to marry where the man was so free and where he personally was not undesirable.

But she had made one miscalculation in her plans. She was a woman whose heart was just as true as she believed, but rather had never been quickened into life. She had imagined that she could go through life as a sort of unemotional figure by the side of a husband whom she did not love, suffering his caresses and endearments, but not returning them or at most paying with simulated affection for the comfort with which he would surround her. But in her heart she was not neutral tints. She must love or hate.

Sir Jaffray's nature fired her, and the more she endeavored to assure herself of her own coldness of heart the more she was moved by him. The very indifference which she affected had overcome her. She could not be indifferent.



The next instant the man was on his back, fared, and she could not hate him, and there was therefore but one possible result. She had chosen, moreover, that kind of holiday which helped to make indifference impossible. She saw her husband at his best during the whole time, and there was no incident of their travel to distract her from him, nothing that caught and held her attention which was not associated closely with him.

More than all, however, he was a man born to be loved by women—strong to command where strength was needed, gentle as a child where gentleness served, as brave as a man can be and courteous to the point of long suffering. In all bodily exercises he was exceptionally agile and enduring, and he possessed in a marked and extraordinary degree just those qualities which to Lola were the type and embodiment of manhood.

She was bound to yield in time to the forceful influence which he exercised, and the more she perceived this and struggled against it the more irresistible did she find it.

As her feelings softened so her fears waxed. She was afraid to grow to love him, because she saw all the dangers of it to her.

One thing she had learned clearly about her husband. With all the sturdy tenacity of his race he held the honor of his name and family as high as a religious creed and perhaps higher. Straight dealing was an instinct and honor and money were secondary.

She had seen 50 instances of this in the months of the honeymoon, and she was shrewd enough to understand that the deceit which she had practiced he would punish remorselessly and visit with implacable unforgetfulness if he ever discovered it.

His faith once given was given absolutely; once betrayed, was withdrawn forever. She did not care while she knew that the tie between them was on her side one of tenge and not of heart. She knew, of course, that in the future, whether Pierre reappeared or not, she would need a clear head and calm judgment to walk safely, but if she grew to love her husband she would be neither clear in head nor calm in judgment.

So long as she could part from him, if all were discovered, without any loss except such as touched her social position and her money interests, she felt that she could go through all with the certainty of ultimate success. But if she loved her husband then there were a thousand and one complications which might follow, each of which would be a source of grief to her.

It was no trouble to her to feign love, to school herself to seem happy in her husband's presence, to be bright and cheerful with him and to shower upon him a hundred smiles and smiles of the spontaneous outcome of a desire to please, but were in reality the more shrewdly chosen because a clever calculation prompted each and all.

Gradually she was surprised at an ease with which this acting was done and the pleasure which it seemed to give her in the doing, nor did she guess the real source of the pleasure until an incident which happened when she left her husband away some two or three months revealed the truth to her.

They had ridden into a far outlying town in one of the southern states, and Lola was standing in the street alone waiting for her husband, who had been detained at the place by some accident, stabled the horses. A couple of drunken rowdies passed, and, noticing her beauty, stopped and spoke to her. She took no notice except to glance at them with some contempt in her expression that one of them lost his temper and, with a deep oath, tried to clutch her by the wrist, vowing he'd kiss her for his insolence.

He led her away to a house that was open at some little distance, and, putting her inside, told her to wait. "You mustn't go back, Jaffray," she said, a fear that she had never felt for herself awaking on account of him, and she clung to him to keep him by her.

"Don't be afraid," he said kindly, some of the fear falling off his arm with a firm, gentle strength, he went out again. He walked straight up to the bully who had assaulted Lola, and, disregarding contemptuously the revolver which the man held threateningly, struck him with his clenched fist a fearful blow in the face, knocking him all across the road. The man lay like a stunned ox. Then Sir Jaffray turned to the companion, but he, seeing which had happened, fired his revolver at random and ran away, swearing.

When Sir Jaffray went back to Lola, he found her more agitated than he had ever seen her, and she did not seem to calm again for many hours and indeed for days afterward.

He did not understand the cause of it all. In that instant the revelation had come of the new feeling which was developing in her, and the knowledge, a view of all that it meant, had agitated her as much as any incident in all her turbulent life.

In the days that followed, Sir Jaffray noticed for the first time in his wife waywardness and uncertainty of temper which were quite unusual, and which surprised and rather grieved him. She was in reality fighting against her new emotion, but he, not having had any earlier had he followed his own inclinations, but he could not interfere to stop the pleasure which she showed on every occasion in all the incidents of their traveling. He was delighted, however, when she came to stay with Lola on the big Atlantic liner and watched the lighthouse at Sandy Hook growing dimmer and dimmer in the haze of distance and felt that they were homeward bound.

But Sir Jaffray was beginning to feel a strong desire to be home. He loved the place and longed to be there and to see Lola installed as its beautiful mistress. He had not had time to leave earlier had he followed his own inclinations, but he could not interfere to stop the pleasure which she showed on every occasion in all the incidents of their traveling. He was delighted, however, when she came to stay with Lola on the big Atlantic liner and watched the lighthouse at Sandy Hook growing dimmer and dimmer in the haze of distance and felt that they were homeward bound.

How she wished she had. Sir Jaffray rallied her once or twice when he caught her brooding apparently. "Beginning to think what a serious matter marriage is?" he asked. "You'll have no end of fuss made of you in the county. Different from the wild west."

"I suppose she is a bit of a fuss," said Lola. "But I know you, and I can manage them, I think." "Not much fear of that," replied her husband, with a smile of admiration. "There are not many people you could manage as well as you do."

"I suppose so, but I'd rather have our time back there," with a movement of the head toward the west, "than a London season."

"You'll grow out of that fast enough," he said. "But I'm glad you haven't been bored. After all, there's no place like the manor, to my mind. I'm awfully fond of the old place, and on my word I go back to it with greater joy every day."

Then, after a long pause, he added, "I shall like it better than ever with you at its head, Lola, and I think you'll get to feel about it pretty much as I do."

"I'll try not to make you do that. I shall be glad when we get there. We're due in tomorrow afternoon, and if all goes as it has hitherto we shall be well up to time. We shall be home before midnight, all being well. I'm afraid that our getting in at such a time will be a bit of a nuisance."

"That night, the last day, we shall spend on board, the baronet went up on deck to smoke a cigar after supper, and Lola went with him. It was a clear, crisp night, and the moon and stars were shining brightly. She took his arm, and, pressing closely to him, walked up and down the deck.

"Our last night at sea, Jaffray," she said. "And a lovely one, eh?" "Have you enjoyed the time?" "Never had a better in my life," he answered enthusiastically. "Didn't know marriage was half so good?" "And she laughed. "If I'd met you before," he replied, like a lover. "I'm glad I've given you one span of happiness, Jaffray," she said, and the tone in which she spoke seemed rather sad.

"It seems to have changed you a good bit," he said. "You're not like the same girl in some ways." "No, not in the least," she put the question in a tone that knocked him at once. "I'm the same with you. You forget that all you came into it mine was a fighting life."

"What had she thought in the Calcutta?" she asked, letting the recollection of the way she had treated the man who had tried to insult her. "But you had to come to the rescue then. I wonder if you always would say so?" "We don't breed cowboys in old England," he answered.

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