

Maida's Secret

By the Author of.... "A Gipsy's Daughter," "Another Man's Wife," "A Heart's Bitterness," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XII.—Continued. Mrs. Parker had not been long when Francis, followed by Dawkins, returned.

"I told Monsieur Parterre that it was for you," he said "and he took special pains. I hope it will be to your satisfaction, Dawkins. And now if you will renew your promise not to reveal the fact of my presence, I shall eat and sleep in happiness."

"I know you would. You can't be mean to me, Maida. You'll have the make-up sent by Winklemann. You won't have a thing to do. He will do everything. And you ask me to commit myself to a lady I shall be glad for her sake. You'll hurry, won't you?"

"Good gracious, Algy! Who is she to have the make-up? Does she bear to this dreadful matter? 'She is the Juliet. And a lover Juliet never walked the boards. You will be inspired only to look at her. I say, you do know the lines, don't you?"

"You said I did myself, only four minutes ago by the watch, and now you ask me to commit myself to a lady I shall be glad for her sake. You'll hurry, won't you?"

"What a stroke of luck it was that you came here so opportunely. Now, and he now turned to his watch and told him he might go down and look at the performance, taking care that no one who knew him should see him and so betray the presence of his master there."

"Come in," he called, with a sort of irritation at being disturbed again. Lord Algy, panting from his unusual exertion, hastened across the room to his side, holding out his hand and crying:

"Hello, Algy, old man! How are you? Who the deuce betrayed me?" "Simmons told me you were here. I never was so glad in my life to see you. You are coming down, of course."

"Nothing of the sort. I had no business to come without giving you warning. I am going to bed as soon as I finish this cigar. Now, don't say a word. I am determined to deny myself the pleasure of anything of the sort. I am not here at all; I am on my way and shall not arrive until tomorrow morning."

I have carried the thing through so far, and it won't come to much harm if I do the rest." Lord Algy watched her as she gave directions in her composed way, and admitted that he could only spoil things by interfering.

He had already sent the famous Winklemann up with the costume and the cosmetics and paints, and when he had finished the room, he found Caryl still keeping up his theatrical complaints, but submitting to the operations of the make-up man with a more than a trick eye.

"Then let us to the beach, dear friend," said Caryl, with a suitable misnomer. "If the slaughter is ready for the lamb, the lamb is ready for the slaughter."

CHAPTER XIII. It was time for the curtain to rise, and the actors were only waiting for the return of Lord Algy. The scene on which Lord Algy had acted was much of his time and of his uncle's money was set, and the audience, having refreshed itself at the lunch table, were eagerly waiting for the next play, for which they had been prepared to expect great things from the exclaims of the duke up to the new Juliet.

"I don't think I am nervous," answered Maida with a faint smile, as it came over her that she was about to be her to have a small acting audience. She bent her head over her bracelet, which had come undone. Half a dozen eager hands felt for her assistance, and captured her roundly by tall figures in Florentine costumes of the finest materials; not cotton velvet and machine lace, such as would be found on the theatre, but silk pile and antique point; not paste jewels, but costly gems, diamonds and rubies and emeralds, and shining on fingers and wrists.

"We are only waiting for you, Lord Algy," said one, as the group away here and to fro. "And here I am just in time and here is my Romeo."

THE ATTACK REPULSED. A Gallant Deed of Arms by the British. The correspondent of the London Standard sends details regarding the gallant defence of Captain McNeill's force in the attack made by the forces of the Mad Mullah, early in June last. He says:

"In the morning, at about nine o'clock, the wind available force of the enemy advanced to the front. Their dispositions were extremely well made. They had ascertained that the southern and western sides of the zereba were the most accessible, and they completely enveloped both these flanks, advancing in perfect order. The position was a critical one, and Captain McNeill, with three hundred men with him—some of whom were sick and left behind by the main column—was further encumbered by the presence of the enormous number of captured rifles. He kept his men, however, under perfect control, and reserved his fire until the enemy approached to within five hundred yards of the zereba, and then he poured in volley after volley, to which the enemy responded with interest. They advanced without a waver to within a hundred and fifty yards of the zereba, and it seemed that their sheer weight of numbers must win the day. At last, however, they were observed to falter, and finally they turned and fled, leaving the ground covered with dead and wounded. Three hundred and forty of their dead were counted, and a short time afterwards the zereba, while about two hundred more were found in the hills which surrounded the plateau on which the zereba is situated."

SANDWICH SECRETS. The secret of a sandwich is entirely in the manipulation. Given good bread, a bit of butter, and a really largely a matter of patience. The bread must be delicately thin and crustless, the butter must be so and evenly spread, these must be finely grated, and meat or fish chopped and pounded to a paste. The best bread is bakers' water bread a day old, though the loaf must not be cut before using. Whenever your feet feel hot and tired, rub the soles of your socks with a little pure yellow soap. This will not only keep the feet cool and comfortable, but it will also prevent corns and other common ailments.

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Friend (noticing the confused heaps of goods of every description scattered promiscuously about the shop)—"What a mess! It's happened! Been taking an inventory, had a fire, or are you going to move out? Shopkeeper—"That shows how little you know about business. It has merely been waiting on a lady who dropped in for a paper of pins."

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THE COURT LAUGHED. Counsel—I insist on an answer to my question. You have not told me all the conversation. I want to know everything that passed between you and Mr. Jones on the occasion to which you refer.

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