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Cannington, Dec. 7, 1886.—22-2.

F. C. Taylor.

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The profits of this old and reliable company are larger than any other Life Office doing business in the Dominion, and its ratio of expenses to income are less than that of any other Canadian or British Office. The policies of this company are indisputable on any ground whatever after two years, and Policies becoming claims are paid at once. The rates charged by this company are as low as any first-class office. All forms of policies are issued.

F. C. TAYLOR,
Agent, Lindsay.

Lindsay, Feb. 24th, 1885.—81

The Canadian Post.

LINDSAY, FRIDAY, DEC. 10, 1886.

A FASCINATING GIRL.

CHAPTER III.

WHILE THE IRON WAS HOT.

Continued from tenth page.

[illegible] know what to say on the spur of the moment; the real Miss Daly was not at all the Miss Daly whom he had expected to find, but a calm self-possessed [illegible] whom sorry or ashamed a refreshment stand had once scolded or rendered shabby. The quiet young man might have been taken for a lady everywhere—might have [illegible] in any society, he thought, if she had had the discretion to hold her tongue. Of course, she would be as sharp and jerky as Miss Racket when she began to discourse all refreshment stand [illegible] being essentially jerky, [illegible] with the money as it rattled [illegible] No, he was mistaken again; [illegible] voice had not an atom's worth of [illegible] in it.

"Your name is Daly?" the major said, for the [illegible] a better question to start with.

"[illegible] What do you require of me?"

"[illegible] had of a little private con[illegible] Daly," he said. "At what time [illegible] this place?"

Miss Daly looked somewhat astonished, [illegible] for address[illegible] A [illegible] flush flickered on her [illegible] brown eyes remained [illegible] inquiring. She did not actually [illegible] yet, notwithstanding that [illegible] kinds of strange beasts [illegible] her path since her novitiate, [illegible] encountered hers were clear [illegible] eyes, not were difficult to [illegible] For the present, [illegible] the singularity of his [illegible] would afford her interlocutor the benefit of the doubt.

"Have you any particular reason for asking?" she said.

"[illegible]

"What [illegible]

"I wish to speak to you on business of importance.

"I do not believe in any business of importance between you and me," said Miss Daly coldly, "unless," she added, quickly—"unless you have heard from my uncle—have been sent to tell me all the news."

"I have not the honor of knowing any member of your family, Miss Daly," said the major, "and the business of importance to which I allluded affects my family rather than your own."

"I can have nothing to do with it."

"Unfortunately you have."

"If you will kindly explain?"

"Not here," said the old soldier, very sternly; "certainly not at this counter, and with these young women listening to us."

"You have my full permission to speak out, sir."

"Where do you live when away from this place?"

"I do not feel called upon to tell you," was the grave reply.

"And you will not tell me, possibly?"

"Sooner I will not."

"Confound it!" he blurted forth, "what are you afraid of?"

"I am not afraid of you, certainly," said Miss Daly, very calmly. "I hardly doubt you but I am not disposed to put my trust in you."

"It must surely strike you that there are topics of conversation which might be discussed in a more fitting place than this?" he said.

"I am not afraid of any topic," was the reply, "and you, as a stranger, have no right to make a mystery about it."

"You distrust me?"

"I distrust any one who is not straightforward," replied Miss Daly.

"Very well—very well," said the major, turning very red, "this is the first time in all my life I have been told I was not straightforward. I—I can't mention the nature of my business without rendering you an object of ridicule to the rest of the young ladies present. They are listening now, for that matter. Look at them."

Miss Daly laughed pleasantly and momentarily at this.

"Ah! yes—they listen a little; and," with a sigh, "they don't like me much. I am not one of them quite."

"I hope you'll never be such a young fool as to try and imitate *their* ways," said the major.

"Oh, they are not as they seem," said Miss Daly. "They are very good and kind sometimes; they are honest, and hard working, and they take care of themselves bravely, considering what defenseless women most of them are."

"Bravo! Miss Daly," said the major. "Let me shake hands with you for sticking up for your class."

Miss Daly did not accept the invitation; she was indignant now, and disposed to turn from him.

"By Jove! you're a brave little woman," he continued; "and it was beastly unfair of me to sneer in that fashion at you. Not that I meant to sneer exactly—I intended to advise you, as your own father might do—and I'm old enough to be your father, my child, remember that; and—*Hollo*, you sir! What the devil brings *you* down here?"

"Good gad! uncle, is that you?" and young Todd came to a full stop, and remained with his mouth open and his small eyes distended, as at an apparition which had suddenly confronted him.

"Good Gad! Uncle, is that you?"

"Yes, it is I," said his uncle.

"Do they know you are coming, up at the house?" asked Mr. Todd.

"I thought I would give them an agreeable surprise," was the uncle's evasive answer; "it's a year and a half since I was at Battleton last."

"So long as that?" said the uncomplimentary nephew. "I shouldn't have thought it. Will you—will you take anything?" he stammered forth.

Maj. Crawshaw glanced from his nephew to Miss Daly. The nephew was staring hard at the lady; the lady was looking down demurely at the marble counter.

Too innocent, thought the major; a deuced sight to innocent to be natural. Like Miss Bland, he put the lady down as "sly"—very sly, and a woman of whom to be wary from that time forth. If she had blushed and giggled and leered, as Miss Racket would have done, he would not have been afraid of Miss Daly; but the semblance of utter unconsciousness was an artful proceeding that proved at once the difficult nature of the task which he had set himself. He must be very wary in this business.

He replied to his nephew's offer, "No, thank you, nothing more till we get home;" and he linked his arm in that of Edwin's forthwith.

"I—I didn't think of going to the house just at present," stammered young Todd; "I have only just left it."

"It's so long a time since I have been this way, that I am very likely to miss it without your guidance," said the major.

"Yes—but——"

"And surely there is nothing here that is worth wasting time over," he added, sarcastically, "the refreshments are bad; and the waiters we can leave to the passengers, porters and shopmen."

"Ah!—yes—exactly. Shall I call this fly? then you can take your luggage as well, and I can——"

"No, we will walk, Edwin. The luggage is booked to follow me. What a time it is since we have had a long chat together!"

But young Todd was not to be led away wholly without an effort; he had had time to reflect on the position.

"One moment, uncle," he said, disengaging his arm; "I always have a cigar after dinner. I'll not keep you a moment."

He stood at a little distance from the counter, and watched his nephew approach Miss Daly and give the order required. Already the truth was very patent to him that there was an understanding of some kind between Edwin Todd and Miss Daly, and that they were neither inclined to trust him in the matter. Already they both suspected him, and guessed the object of his coming; it would be necessary to strike while the iron was hot. He was a man of action, quick and prompt; when he thought a thing, or said a thing, he carried it out at once. There had been no shilly-shallying at any period of his existence. "That able and indefatigable officer" he had once been styled in a dispatch to headquarters, and it had brought him promotion and made him a proud man. Able and indefatigable he was—who knew that better than he—and he was not going to be baffled at the outset by a pig-headed boy and a whim of a girl. Not he; he was too old a soldier and too used to campaigning.

Young Todd was muttering something to Miss Daly—making fresh arrangements, possibly—when the major said sharply:

"Come, Edwin, we can't hang about here all night."

"All right," said Edwin, evidently in some fear of his uncle at present, "I am ready."

A few more words from him to Miss Daly, the same innocent expression on Miss Daly's face, and then Maj. Crawshaw and his nephew were on the high road together.

The major began at once—the iron was quite hot enough, he thought.

"I question the policy of these refreshment stands at railway stations," he said, "and a lot of bold faced women behind them ready to flirt with any cad who turns up."

"People must have refreshments, I suppose," young Todd remarked.

"I would limit the refreshments consumed to bona fide travelers. I would not allow half the town sneaking in and out at all hours after these girls, if I had any authority here. By Jove! I'd alter the whole business," said the major.

"I don't think he'll the town goes there. I don't know," said Edwin Todd, mildly. He was a mild young man of outward aspect, and very difficult to argue with. He had an unpleasant habit of agreeing upon any point for the sake of peace and quietness, and keeping his own opinion to himself, and this was always the difficulty with young Todd.

"*You* go there," said the major, suddenly, "for one."

"Yes; but I'm not half the town exactly, and——"

"And you're always there, Edwin; you know you are."

"Who told you so? Mother?" asked his nephew; "or my sisters?"

"I don't mince matters. Your mother wrote to say she was unhappy about you—that she was afraid you had formed an attachment to one of these young women, and that I had better run down and see what mischief was done, and what mischief could be prevented, and here I am. There."

It was no wonder that Maj. Crawshaw's feelings were hurt when Miss Daly had hinted that he was far from straightforward; there was no beating about the bush in this instance. He had told his nephew very plainly what was the object of his visit, and within a quarter of an hour of his meeting with him, too. That was brisk and frank and soldier-like, at any rate.

Young Todd smiled in a galvanic kind of fashion, and shifted his stick from his right hand to his left.

"There's no mischief done, uncle, and there's no mischief to prevent," he said at last.

"That's well. I'm glad of it."

"The women folk are foolish and nervous about it, and——"

"About what?" asked the major, interrupting him.

"About my going to the station and having a little chat now and then—as young fellows will, you know—with a pretty woman. I dare say you have done it yourself in your day, uncle."

"Hundreds of times," was the ready answer; "but it was all fair sailing, sir, and no false sentiment or false principles behind it all. Do you understand me?"

"Yes—no—I think so."

"I wasn't fool enough to fall in love with any woman of that kind."

"I suppose not."

"Are you?"

"In love? Oh, no!" said Edwin Todd, with a feeble little laugh; "not exactly; that's not in my line."

"Although, if I had been in love, I should have been man enough to own it," continued the major. "There's something simple in it, but nothing disgraceful, if it's an honest affection."

"Precisely," said Todd; "just my opinion, uncle."

"But you're not in love?"

"Not I. Not a bit of that," said the vulgar young Todd, with a rather feeble laugh.

"You're too sensible a fellow, I hope?"

"I flatter myself I am."

"I'm very glad to hear it, Edwin, for your mother's sake as well as your own; but don't keep speaking with your teeth closed; it aggravates me," said the major. "And now to the second and more important point. Are any of the girls at the Junction in love with you, do you think?"

Young Todd blushed and simpered, and even hazarded a wink at his uncle.

"I shouldn't like to say; really, one can't say exactly, you know," was his shy and hesitating answer.

"I should say it was extremely unlikely," remarked the major, after looking askance at his newhew; "but women are easily flattered into thinking a man is in love with them, and then their silly heads are turned in all directions but the right."

"That's their fault," was young Todd's comment.

"And their misfortune always, poor women. Why, I consider that a man who feigns an affection he does not feel, and so misleads a girl out of her sphere to think of him, is an infernal scamp—a most infernal scamp, sir."

"Why, yes," said young Todd, fairly alarmed at this sudden exhibition of fierceness, "so he is, unless——"

"I'd cut off such a vagabond with a shilling, were he my own son," interrupted the major. "I'd kick him down stairs out of my house as I would a dog; I'd— What do you mean by 'unless?' Unless what? Why on earth don't you finish your sentences?"

"I was going—but you wouldn't let me finish, if you remember," answered Edwin.

"Well, well," said the major, impatiently, "*unless*——"

"Unless she encourages him, and leads him on—knows that he is not likely to marry her, and still prefers his company to other fellows'. Don't you see?"

"I see a woman going fast to the devil, then," said the major, "and I say God help her!" that's all. But as for the man, he's either a fool or a knave, and I say God confound him, with all my heart. He doesn't deserve any sympathy; surely you don't think he does?"

"N—no; certainly not."

"But we will have a long talk over this presently, now that we have cleared the briers and brushwood away; there's been a little nonsense going on at the refreshment stand but I am glad you tell me there's nothing serious between you and that Daly girl."

"Serious!" said young Tom, with another unpleasant laugh; "of course not."

"Your mother will be glad to hear it."

"I have told her so a thousand times already," said Edwin Todd, and for the first time rather sulkily.

"Ah! but not as you have spoken to me, as one man can speak to another, face to face, and without a lie between them," said the major.

"Yes—exactly," murmured the nephew; but he did not meet his uncle face to face then, but looked down upon the flinty pathway of the old town and set his teeth closer together than ever.

The major was a man of tact, and did not "worry" the question. They walked on in silence after this; he had spoken out and paved the way to a complete understanding; he was disposed, being a truthful man, to believe his nephew, if not wholly and implicitly, and to think that the women folk had made the usual mountain out of the customary molehill. So far, so good. It was a very fair beginning, considering that this was the first hour of his arrival; and now here they were before the great country house of the Todds, lying a little apart, on a hillside, from the town of Battleton.

The major let go his nephew's arm, strode forward, pushed open the great swing gate, and entered first.

"You'll find them all within, uncle," said Edwin; "I shall not be long."

"But——"

"I shall be back in a few minutes; I have forgotten something for to-morrow—in the town, you know;" and young Todd was off like a lapwing.

"Yes, you have forgotten something, Edwin, and that is that I'm not to be humbugged," muttered the angry major, as he stood in the dark carriageway looking after the rapidly receding form of his nephew.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAJOR SETTLES IT SATISFACTORILY.

Ruth Daly, prayer book in hand, was coming quietly home from church the following day, when across the last meadow between the church and town she encountered Maj. Crawshaw. She recognized very quickly the tall, inquisitive gentleman of the preceding evening, and would have passed him had he not stood direct in her way in the little footpath that ran across the fields there.

"Good morning, Miss Daly," he said, raising his hat.

Miss Daly bowed slightly, but did not respond to his salutation.

"I thought you would come this way," he continued, "I have been looking for you."

"Indeed!"

"They told me at your lodgings that you had gone to church, so I came to meet you."

"They had no right to tell you where I had gone, and you had no right to ask, sir," said Miss Daly, drawing herself up very proudly now.

"Pardon me, but I had a right."

"To persecute me because I serve at Battleton Junction. Ah, well, you are not the first gentleman who has thought that," she said satirically.

"I have not persecuted you, young lady," said Maj. Crawshaw, very gravely, "and I have no intention of doing so."

"Then good morning."

"But I have an intention of speaking to you about my nephew; I have come from London expressly for that."

"You had better speak to your nephew himself."

"I have done so, as you," he added, with emphasis, "are perfectly aware."

Miss Daly colored slightly.

"Yes, I am aware of that," she confessed.

"He told you so last night, after he had given me the slip in a most ungentlemanly fashion. Did he not?"

"He told me that you were his uncle, Maj. Crawshaw, and that he was very much afraid of you. But I am not, sir," she added looking at him fearlessly, "and I will trouble you to let me pass to my home."

The major half drew aside to allow her to pass, and then altered his mind and blocked the way again.

"No, I can't be put down in this fashion," he said firmly. "I must speak, and I will speak, and if you are not afraid of me, you will listen. My persecution will not last many minutes."

"Very well; come to the counter to-morrow and leave me in peace to-day."

"Leave you in peace!" said the major, indignantly. "I have had enough of this nonsense between the two of you. You know my nephew is waiting for you well enough."

"No, I don't" said Miss Daly, quickly.

"Where is he?"

"Outside your own door—hanging about like a thief."

"He told me he would never do that again."

"He would tell you anything, my child; he's an abominable liar," said the major.

"Yes, he is not very truthful," said Ruth Daly, thoughtfully.

"You had better listen to an old man like me," the major remarked, "though he may tell you some plain truths, than to a weak fellow like him. It might do you more good, Miss Daly, after all."

Ruth Daly looked at the uncle's earnest face attentively, and her manner changed for the better, and became more natural.

"Perhaps it would. Come along, then," she said.

She turned from the direction she had been pursuing, and the major said:

"This way?"

"Yes; away from him, please," she added, with a little shudder.

"You don't like my nephew?"

"I can't bear him," was the reply.

"Honor bright?"

"Upon my honor, I can't," she said.

"Then I have nothing to trouble you about, Miss Daly," said the major. "I can say good morning at once, that is if I can believe you—and it's very odd, somehow, but I can. It is all *his* fault, then?"

He spoke as if he had made a full explanation of the position, and she did not affect to misunderstand him.

"Yes, it is all his fault," was the reply. "If he would only keep away—if he would not be so very, very foolish, and not make me look so very foolish, too—if he would talk to Miss Dart or Miss Racket—no, he had better not, perhaps, for he is weak, and neither of them would make him a good wife——"

"Good wife—good God!" said the major.

"But if he would keep away for a while among his own people, or if you would take him away to India, sir, he would soon be, oh! so much the better for it."

"And you would be glad to see the last of him?"

"Yes, very glad—poor fellow!"

"I don't like that 'poor fellow!' said the major, doubtfully, again. "'Pity is akin to love,' the proverb says."

"Oh! I could never love him, with all his property at his back, and all his fine mother and sisters to love me even in return," cried Ruth Daly. "He is a poor, weak, whisky drinking boy, who wants a good uncle to look after him."

"Are you laughing at me, Miss Daly?"

"No, I am very serious," she replied, "but this Edwin Todd has been left to run wild too much, and so has grown wild. He has wanted his own way at home, and had it. There has been no one to care for him, and he is careless in consequence."

"All his own fault."

"Yours; for you are the guardian of him, and he respects and fears you."

"You are an extraordinary young woman," exclaimed the major. "You should have been in a better position than at that beastly refreshment counter. By Jove! here am I receiving advice, instead of giving it."

"You are an extraordinary young woman."

"I am very rude, I fear."

"Not at all; don't mention it," he replied. "I like rudeness of this kind; it does one good. You're straightforward, if I'm not."

"Ah! I remember. I said last night you were not straightforward, and you were offended."

(To be continued.)

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Watchmakers and Jewelers, Foot of Kent-st., Lindsay.

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Crown Central Grocery.

Lindsay, Dec. 6, 1886.—22-2.

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Lindsay, December 10th, 1886.—22.