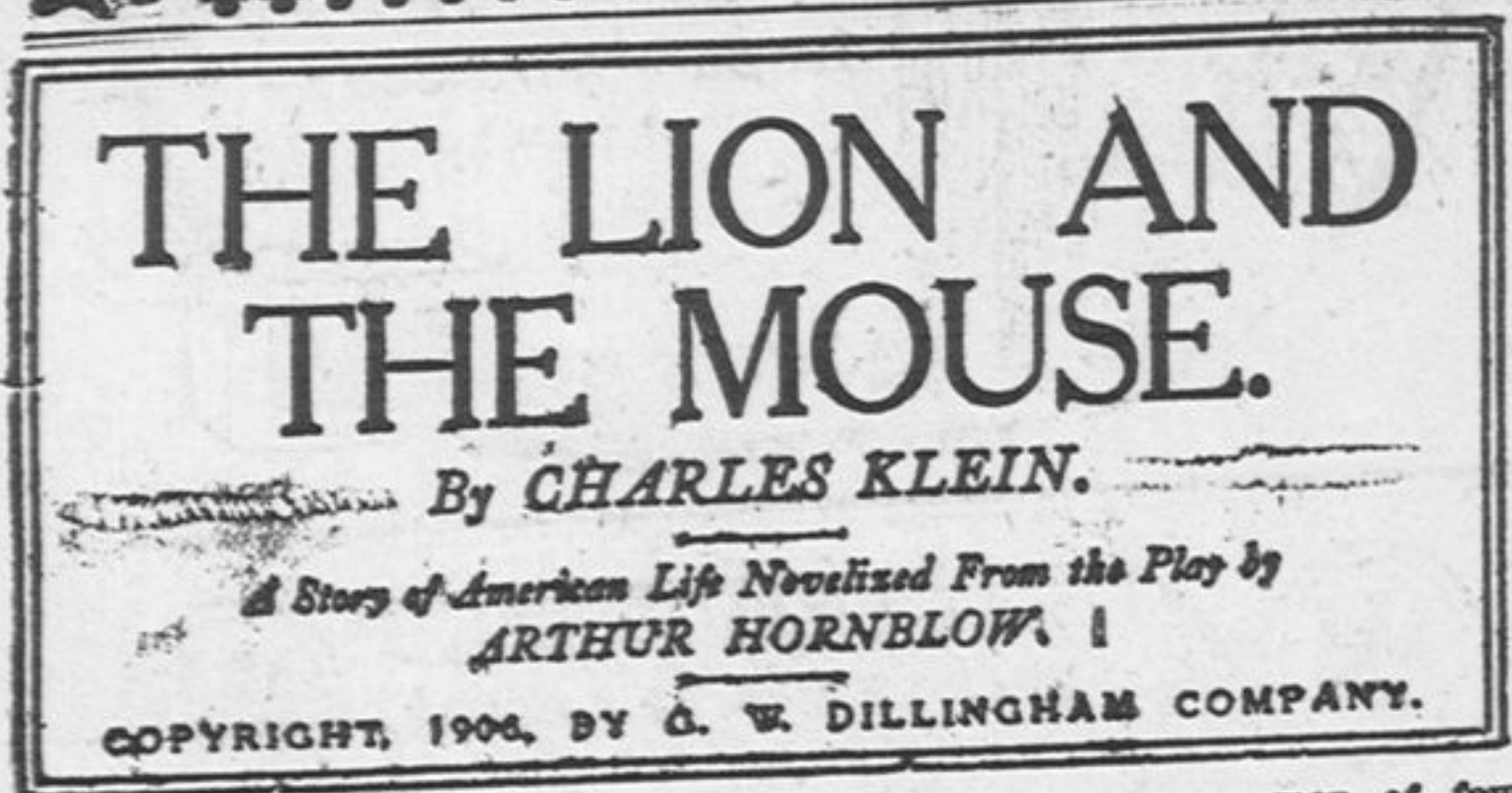


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THE LION AND THE MOUSE. By CHARLES KLEIN. A Story of American Life Novelized From the Play by ARTHUR HORNBLOW.

him to come at once to New York and meet himself and his father on a matter of importance. The senator naturally jumped to the conclusion that Jefferson and Ryder had reached an amicable understanding, and he immediately hurried to New York and, with his daughter, came round to Seventy-fourth street.

When Ryder senior entered the library, Senator Roberts was striding nervously up and down the room. This he felt, was an important day. The ambition of his life seemed on the point of being attained.

"Hello, Roberts," was Ryder's cheerful greeting. "What's brought you from Washington at a critical time like this? The Rossmore impeachment needs every friend we have."

"To meet me and my son?" echoed Ryder, astonished. The senator, perplexed and beginning to feel real alarm, showed the financier Jefferson's letter. Ryder read it, and he looked pleased.

"That's all right," he said, "if the lad asked you to meet us here it can mean only one thing—that at last he has made up his mind to this marriage."

"That's what I thought," replied the senator, breathing more freely. "I was sorry to leave Washington at such a time, but I'm a father, and Kate is more to me than the Rossmore impeachment. Besides, to see her married to your son Jefferson is one of the dearest wishes of my life."

"You can rest easy," said Ryder. "That is practically proved. Jefferson's sending for you settles that. He'll be here any minute. How is the Rossmore case progressing?"

"Not so well as it might," growled the senator. "There's a lot of maudlin sympathy for the judge. He's a pretty sick man by all accounts, and the newspapers seem to be taking his part. One or two of the western senators are talking corporate influence and trust legislation, but when it comes to a vote the matter will be settled on party lines."

"That means that Judge Rossmore will be removed?" demanded Ryder sternly. "Yes, with five votes to spare," answered the senator.

"That's not enough," insisted Ryder. "There must be at least twenty. Let there be no blunders, Roberts. The man is a menace to all the big commercial interests. This thing must go through."

The door opened, and Jefferson appeared. On seeing the senator talking with his father, he hesitated on the threshold. "Come in, Jeff," said his father pleasantly. "You expected to see Senator Roberts, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir. How do you do, senator?" said the young man, advancing into the room. "I got your letter, my boy, and here I am," said the senator, smiling affably. "I suppose we can guess what the business is, eh?"

against one, really, I'm awfully sorry, eh, what?" The door opened, and Kate Roberts bounced in. She was smiling and full



"You never proposed to run away with my daughter?"

of animal spirits, but on seeing the stern face of her father and the pitiable picture presented by her faithful Fitz she was intelligent enough to immediately scent danger.

"Did you want to see me, father?" she inquired boldly. "Yes, Kate," answered the senator gravely, "we have just been having a talk with Mr. Bagley, in which you were one of the subjects of conversation. Can you guess what it was?"

"The girl looked from her father to Bagley and from him to the Ryders. Her aristocratic lover made a movement forward as if to exculpate himself, but he caught Ryder's eye and remained where he was.

"Well?" she said, with a nervous laugh. "Is it true?" asked the senator, "that you were about to marry this man secretly?"

She sat down her eyes and answered: "I suppose you know everything." "Have you anything to add?" asked her father sternly.

"No," said Kate, shaking her head. "It's true. We intended to run away, didn't we, Fitz?" "Never mind about Mr. Bagley," thundered her father. "Haven't you a word of shame for this disgrace you have brought upon me?"

"Oh, papa, don't be so cross. Jefferson did not care for me. I couldn't be an old maid. Mr. Bagley has a lovely castle in England, and one day he'll sit in the house of lords. He'll explain everything to you."

"He'll explain nothing," rejoined the senator grimly. "Mr. Bagley returns to England tonight. He won't have time to explain anything." "Returns to England?" echoed Kate, dismayed.

"Yes, and you go with me to Washington at once." The senator turned to Ryder. "Goodby, Ryder. The little domestic comedy is ended. I'm grateful it didn't turn out a drama. The next time I pick out a son-in-law I hope I'll have better luck."

He shook hands with Jefferson and left the room, followed by his crestfallen daughter. Ryder, who had gone to write something at his desk, strode over to where Mr. Bagley was standing and handed him a check.

"Here, sir. This settles everything to date. Good day." "But I—I—stammered the secretary helplessly. "Good day, sir."

Ryder turned his back on him and conversed with his son, while Mr. Bagley slowly and as if regretfully made his exit.

Meantime, John Ryder had not ceased worrying about his son. The removal of Kate Roberts as a factor in his future had not eliminated the danger of Jefferson taking the bit between his teeth one day and contracting a secret marriage with the daughter of his enemy, and when he thought of the mere possibility of such a thing happening he stormed and raved until his wife, accustomed as she was to his choleric outbursts, was thoroughly frightened. For some time after Bagley's departure, father and son got along together fairly amicably, but Ryder senior was quick to see that Jefferson had something on his mind which was worrying him, and he rightly attributed it to his infatuation for Miss Rossmore. He was convinced that his son knew where the judge's daughter was, although his own efforts to discover her whereabouts had been unsuccessful.

Sergeant Ellison had confessed absolute failure. Miss Rossmore, he reported, had disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed her, and further search was futile. Knowing well his son's impulsive, headstrong disposition, Ryder senior believed him quite capable of marrying the girl secretly any time. The only thing that John Ryder did not know was that Shirley Rossmore was not the kind of girl to allow any man to inveigle her into a secret marriage. The Colesus, who judged the world's morals by his own, was not of course, aware of this, and he worried night and day thinking what he could do to prevent his son from marrying the daughter of the man he had wronged.

The more he pondered over it the more he regretted that there was not some other girl with whom Jefferson could fall in love and marry. He need not seek a rich girl—there was certainly enough money in the Ryder family to provide for both. He wished they knew a girl, for example, as attractive and clever as Miss Green. Ah, he thought, there was a girl who would make a man of Jefferson—brave, ambitious, active! And the more he thought of it the more the idea grew on him that Miss Green would be an ideal daughter-in-law and at the same time snatch his son from the clutches of the Rossmore woman.

Jefferson during all these weeks was growing more and more impatient. He knew that any day now Shirley might take her departure from their house and return to Massachusetts. If the impeachment proceedings went against her father it was more than likely that he would lose her forever, and if, on the contrary, the judge were acquitted Shirley never would be willing to marry him without his father's consent.

"Well, that's all right, my boy, we'll let it go at that. You're sorry—so am I. You've shown me your cards—I'll show you mine." He composed, unruffled manner vanished. He suddenly threw off the mask and revealed the tempest that was raging within. He leaned across the desk, his face convulsed with uncontrollable passion, a terrifying picture of human wrath. Shaking his fist at his son he shouted:

"When I get through with Judge Rossmore at Washington, I'll start after his daughter. This time tomorrow he'll be a disgraced man. A week later she will be a notorious woman. Then we'll see if you'll be so eager to marry her!"

"Father!" cried Jefferson. "There is sure to be something in her life that won't bear inspection," sneered Ryder. "There is in everybody's life. I'll find out what it is. Where is she today? She can't be found. No one knows where she is—no even her own mother. Something is wrong—the girl's no good!"

Jefferson started forward as if to resent these insults to the woman he loved, but realizing that it was his own father, he stopped short and his hands fell powerless at his side. "Well, that's all," inquired Ryder senior, with a sneer.

"That's all," replied Jefferson, "I'm going. Goodby." "Goodby," answered his father indifferently. "Leave your address with your mother."

Jefferson left the room and Ryder senior, as if exhausted by the violence of his own outburst, sank back limp in his chair. The crisis he dreaded had come at last. His son had openly defied his authority and was going to marry the daughter of his enemy. He must do something to prevent it; the marriage must not take place, but what could he do? The boy was of age and legally his own master. He could do nothing to restrain his actions unless they put him in an insane asylum. He would rather see his son there, he mused, than married to the Rossmore woman.

Presently there was a timid knock at the library door. Ryder rose from his seat and went to see who was there. To his surprise it was Miss Green. "May I come in?" asked Shirley. "Certainly, by all means. Sit down." He drew up a chair for her, and his manner was so cordial that it was easy to see she was a welcome visitor.

"Mr. Ryder," she began in a low, tremulous voice, "I have come to see you on a very important matter. I've been waiting to see you all evening, and as I shall be here only a short time longer I want to ask you a great favor, perhaps the greatest you've ever asked. I want to ask you for mercy—for mercy to me."

She stopped and glanced nervously at him, but she saw he was paying no attention to what she was saying. He was puffing heavily at his cigar, evidently preoccupied with his own thoughts. To be continued.

"Certainly, Jefferson. What is it?" "I want to appeal to you, sir. I want you to use your influence before it is too late to save Judge Rossmore. A word from you at this time would do wonders in Washington."

The financier swung half round in his chair, the smile of greeting faded out of his face, and his voice was hard as he replied coldly: "Again? I thought we had agreed not to discuss Judge Rossmore any further."

actions or to criticize my methods?" he burst out finally. "You force me to do so," answered Jefferson hotly. "I want to tell you that I am heartily ashamed of this whole affair and your connection with it, and since you refuse to make reparation in the only way possible for the wrong you and your associates have done Judge Rossmore—that is, by saving him to warn you that I take back my word in regard to not marrying without your consent. I want you to know that I intend to marry Miss Rossmore as soon as she will consent to become my wife—that is," he added, with bitterness, "if I can succeed in overcoming her prejudices against my family."

Ryder senior laughed contemptuously. "Prejudices against a thousand million dollars?" he exclaimed skeptically. "Yes," replied Jefferson decisively, "prejudices against our family, against you and your business practices. Money is not everything. One day you will find that out. I tell you definitely that I intend to make Miss Rossmore my wife."

Ryder senior made no reply, and as Jefferson had expected an explosion, this unnatural calm rather startled him. He was sorry he had spoken so harshly. It was his father, after all. "You've forced me to defy you, father," he added. "I'm sorry."

Ryder senior shrugged his shoulders and resumed his seat. He lit another cigar and with affected carelessness he said: "All right, Jeff, my boy, we'll let it go at that. You're sorry—so am I. You've shown me your cards—I'll show you mine."

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