THE COURT OF ST. SIMON

By ANTHONY PARTRIDGE

Author of Passers-By, The Golden Webb, etc.

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CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

A maid entered the room, to whom Sophy gave some rapid orders. "The automobile and some plain outdoor clothes," she directed. "Mr. Welgrove, do you think that you had better come with me?"

"I am at your service, madam," he answered.

They drove to Pelham street and met with their first check. Miss Sophy was out with her nurse, Mrs. Poynton explained with great volubility, and it was not at all certain when they would be back. She believed that they were to meet the child's father somewhere and go down to the Exhibition during the afternoon. They turned reluctantly away.

"There is only one thing to be done," the Vicomtesse declared. "I shall go to the fencing academy in Soho Square."

They re-entered the car and drove there. The court was a little difficult to find, and in the end they had to walk a few yards up a narrow passage, which terminated in a blank wall. On the left-hand side was a door, which stood open. They passed through into a sort of reception hall, hung with foils and masks. No one came to them and they failed to discover any bell. Finally, guided by the sound of foils, Mr. Welgrove opened another door and they found themselves in a large bare room with a huge skylight. A couple of men—foreigners apparently—were sitting with masks on their knees, smoking cigarettes. In the center of the room Valentin was fencing with a pupil. They stood and waited for several minutes. Then a man in his shirt sleeves came from a further room and inquired their business.

"This lady and I wish to speak to Mr. Valentin for a moment," the lawyer told him.

The man assented doubtfully. "He is very busy this morning," he said. "One of our professors is away, and you see there are two more gentlemen waiting to fence with him. Perhaps he can spare you a moment after this bout, but only a moment. Those gentlemen have been waiting for some time."

Sophy nodded. "We will not keep him," she promised. "We will make an appointment for later on."

The man turned away, and almost immediately the bout was over. Valentin had disarmed his pupil and was standing leaning a little forward upon his foil, breathing heavily. The man in shirt sleeves whispered in his ear, and Valentin turned abruptly round. Very slowly he came toward the two visitors. His left arm was still in a bandage. He was ghastly pale, and the perspiration was standing out in beads upon his forehead. He was obviously out of breath, too, although he was making violent efforts not to show it. So ill did he seem that once he tottered and Mr. Welgrove put out his hand. With a wonderful effort, however, he pulled himself together.

"To what am I indebted, madame, for this most unexpected visit?" he asked coldly. "I do not encourage even my friends to come here in working hours, and, as you see, I am busy today."

"I must speak to you about Sophy, Valentin," she began, her voice softening in spite of herself.

"Then it must be at another time and place," Valentin declared. "You are occupying time now which belongs to my employers. Signor Vatelli is in a bad temper already, and you see how he is watching us. Those two pupils are waiting to fence."

"If you will pardon my making the remark," Mr. Welgrove said, "you scarcely seem in the condition yourself for any more exercise."

"I am perfectly well," Valentin answered. "The air of the place is a little close. It will be at least half an hour before I am at liberty, and even then I cannot conceive any subject which we could profitably discuss. I am coming, signor."

He left them standing there. They moved slowly towards the door. Valentin was already in position, and the clash of foils recommenced. In the small reception hall, Sophy threw herself into an easy chair."

"I shall wait here," she announced. "Will you write a note, Mr. Welgrove, and take in to him to let him know? I don't care whether he is half an hour or an hour, we must remain."

Mr. Welgrove did as he was bidden, and reappeared. "I gave the note to the proprietor," he announced. "He has promised that your husband shall have it before the next bout."

The woman leaned back in the dusty, faded plush chair, and sat there patiently. The place was a strangely silent corner, the roar of the streets outside scarcely reached them. Upon the books and magazines, even on the masks and foils, the dust lay thick. Ten minutes or a quarter of an hour passed by, and the only sound was the clatter of the foils inside the room, the stamp of feet, Valentin's voice giving instructions in terse French phrases.

Then suddenly they heard something else, a slow, shuffling footstep upon the paved courtyard outside. Sophy opened her eyes and looked up. Upon the threshold of the open door stod the figure of a man. He wore the clothes of a tramp. He was collarless, his hands were thrust into his pockets, and a cap came forward over his eyes. He seemed about to pass straight into the inner room, but glanced first suspiciously at Sophy and her companion. Sophy returned his gaze with something of the natural disgust of a woman of her order for the unclean and the unwashed. Then something fresh crept into her eyes. She looked at him, indeed, as one might look at a visitant from some unknown and horrible world. She did not move—she lacked the power, but she shook all over, shook so that her knees failed to support her when a moment afterwards she tried to struggle to her feet. The young man, whose face was already so deathly pale that any change of color was impossible, betrayed his emotion only in the sudden start of fear, the gleam of his teeth as his lips parted in an ugly snarl.

"Guy!" she exclaimed at last. "What are you doing—dressed like that? What has happened to you?"

He looked swiftly around; it was the searching, shrinking look of the habitual criminal. "Hush!" he muttered. "I did not expect to see you here. Give me some money."

She laid some gold upon the table. He snatched it up with shaking fingers.

"But, Guy," she protested, "you have money enough of your own!"

"I can't touch it for the present," he answered hoarsely.

"You are in trouble again," she faltered, "after all your promises?"

"Curse my promises and you, too!" he groaned. "Don't sit there looking at me as though I were some sort of an animal. I tell you I like to go about like this. It pleases me—that's enough."

Mr. Welgrove coughed. It was certainly incumbent upon him to intervene. "Mr. Arlen," he said, "you must allow me to express my regret at seeing you bearing such an unworthy part in life. I cannot believe that it is of your own deliberate choice that you attire yourself in this unseemly manner. Surely it is not well that you should crawl about the streets in rags! You have spent, I know, a large part of your fortune, but——"

"Oh, shut up!" the young man interrupted, striking the little table with his fist. "Shut up, old man Welgrove! You don't understand—you can't see any further than your nose. And you, too, Sophy. There's a taint in my blood, I suppose. When things go wrong, I'm like this—I'm terrified to death! I'd do anything to get away from it all. When the danger's over, I'm just as certain to go back again as time is to pass. That's the long and short of it, you know. No use my making promises. Where's Valentin? Is he in there?"

She started. "But, Guy," she pleaded, "you remember your promise. You were to keep away from him."

The young man began to laugh in an unpleasant manner. Then he stopped short. The sound of another footstep was heard coming down the courtyard. With a gesture of silence towards his sister, he stole on tiptoe into the inner room, glancing fearfully behind. Sophy's head for a moment dropped into her hands.

"He's mad!" she muttered. "I'm quite sure that he is mad or bewitched! After all that has happened, here he is still hovering around the man who ruined him!"

She looked up; her face was white and set.

"You mean your husband?"

"Yes!" she answered, almost fiercely. "And to think that a moment ago I was almost sorry for him when I saw him looking pale and worn out, sorry because he seemed to be trying to earn his living honestly! I even hoped that my plan might have succeeded!"

She sat with clenched fingers. The footstep outside had materialized. Another visitor entered—a somewhat bulky man in tweeds, with a rubicund face. He glanced inquiringly around him. "Any way of getting inside?" he asked good-naturedly.

All the time his eyes were busy about the place. Mr. Welgrove, pointing to the inner door, replied: "The fencing saloon is in there."

The stranger nodded and passed in. He found himself confronted upon the threshold by Valentin, foil in hand. The entrance to the room was narrow, and Valentin's form blocked the way.

"I beg your pardon," the latter said, "strangers are not allowed in the fencing gallery. What is it that you desire?"

The man's eyes were looking beyond him, sweeping around the place. "Are you the proprietor?"

"I am one of the instructors," Valentin answered, without moving.

"I should like to watch a bout," the stranger said. "I am thinking of taking up fencing again."

"Then you must come another time," Valentin told him. "There will be no more fencing today. One of the instructors is away and I have had two hours and a half of it already."

The stranger looked at him and nodded. "You do seem pretty well done," he admitted. "Do you object to my looking around the place?"

"There is nothing to see," Valentin answered.

"But you have another pupil here who has not fenced yet," the newcomer remarked. "He entered just before me."

Valentin shook his head. "No one has passed into the hall for the last quarter of an hour," he declared.

The stranger shrugged his shoulders. "A mistake of mine," he admitted. "I wish you good morning, sir. I will return another day."

He nodded and walked out. Valentin remained leaning upon his foil for a moment. His face was livid, he seemed to be an utter wreck. All the time, however, he kept his eyes fixed upon the door in case the man should return. The sound of his footsteps died away. Valentin, without a glance at his waiting visitors, re-entered the academy.

To be Continued Tomorrow.

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For the six year size the dress will require 3 yards of material 27, 2½ yards 36, or 1¼ yards 44, with ⅝ yard of all-over embroidery 18 inches wide and 7 yards of banding to make as shown in front view; or 1¾ yards of flouncing 11 inches wide with 1⅜ yards of material 36 inches wide and ⅝ yard of all-over 18 inches wide, to make as shown in back view.

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Carrsville, Ky.—In advices from this town, Mrs. Hattie Cain says: "For 15 years I was a great sufferer from womanly trouble, and would have to send for a doctor about every three months, and sometimes oftener.

I cannot explain to you how dreadfully I suffered at these times. I would have convulsions, and it seemed that I would die.

Everyone who saw me thought there wasn't any chance for my recovery.

The doctor said he thought I should have an operation, but I couldn't consent to that, so he said for me to try Cardui, the woman's tonic, as maybe it would help me.

I began taking Cardui, and oh! Such a surprise it was to me! The first bottle I took, I knew it was the medicine for me, for I began to mend right away.

After taking nine bottles my condition was perfect.

It has now been seven years since I was in such wretched health, and I can do more work, can walk and go where I please, and it doesn't hurt me.

I owe all of this to Cardui.

I have induced several of my neighbors to take it and it worked like a charm."

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FEMININE CHAT AND CHATTER

GOSSIP AND ADVICE FOR THE WORLD OF WOMEN.

Don't Be a Guinea Hen—A Fuss Over Nothing at All—The Husband Earns the Right and Welcome to His Home—For Whom Did He Buy Furniture and Settle Bills and Buy New Frocks?

BY WINIFRED BLACK.

Dear me! Dear me! Dear me! What a fuss over nothing at all!

So father comes right into the parlor and visits with your friends and talks to daughter's company, too, and makes jokes, and you're so ashamed of him you don't know what to do, and he seems to think he's perfectly welcome, and whatever shall you do about it?

"Perfectly welcome" in his own home! Where on earth do you want him to find a welcome, if not there?

Who pays the rent for that home, pray tell, and who settles the electric light bill, and who bought those very comfy chairs and that cozy table, I should like to know?

For whom did he buy them and why did he buy them?

To be turned out of his own rooms whenever somebody happens to come to pay a fugitive call?

What's the matter with father?

Not a single thing as far as I can see, but something very serious is the matter with mother and daughter, too, if your strange letter is any criterion. Why should you want to shut him out of all the fun just because he supports you?

You were glad enough to see him coming up the steps when you weren't married to him—what has changed him so in your eyes now?

Are you one of those women who think their husbands are just conveniences, just those to pay the bills, and that's about all?

What is husband getting out of it all anyhow?

Are you such a fascinator that just one glance from your bright eyes is supposed to recompense him for slaving all day at the office just to get the money to buy you new spring clothes and array your daughter like one of Solomon's lilies?

Father earns his right to that house—do you?

What has daughter ever done to gladden the earth?

How do you know daughter's friends make fun of father?

If she was any kind of a daughter they wouldn't be her friends very long after she found out that they did it.

Ashamed of your husband, apologizing for him to you grand friends? How grand are they anyhow, those friends?

I wish father would take that daughter of yours and give her a good old-fashioned spanking. That's what she seems to need. I hope he'll get tired of being shoved into the background every time a stranger comes to spend the evening, and will go out and find some friends of his own and fill your mean, stingy, grudging, criticising, spiteful house so full of them that there won't be room for a single supercilious, mean-spirited "superior" person inside the doors, and that's what I hope.

For better, for worse; for richer, for poorer—that's what you said when you married this man, and now, just because you think some of your fine, new friends make fun of him, you are ready to turn your silly back on him, and you are teaching the man's own child to make fun of him, too.

Well! Well! You aren't a woman, really; you are a guinea hen—didn't you ever see a guinea hen?

Don't be a guinea hen, whatever you do, my friend, please don't. "The idea! The very idea! Why, the very idea!" What a silly thing to say over and over about an honest, decent, kindly man who doesn't happen to carry his handkerchief in his sleeve or do some other thing that is the fad just now among your "critical friends."

"The idea! The very idea!" That's what I think myself whenever I think of you and your sort.

THE COZY DEN.

"A man's best things are nearest him. Lie close about his feet."

The den is a very delightful part of the home, and lucky is the man who possesses a house with a sufficient number of rooms to make such a luxury possible. Some feminine homemakers allow their own personality to predominate to such an extent that the man of the house feels somewhat out of his element. In such homes it is particularly desirable that there be some little corner that is essentially mannish, which the head of the house can have arranged to suit his fancy—a room that shall be his castle, over which he shall have absolute away.

The very word "den" suggests a comfortable, cozy nook, seen through the transfiguring haze of smoke. It suggests freedom from artificiality and conventionality. It should offer enjoyment of the things that are dear to the heart of man. Whether he is browsing among his favorite books, smoking his oldest pipe or concentrating on his pet hobby, he is at ease in the atmosphere which is rightfully his own. To be sure, it takes him back to his bachelor days, and he seems in his den more like the man he used to be, of the man that the homemaker fell in love with, and she must remember this fact if her husband's love of strong colors or strong tobacco and his tendency toward untidiness cause her occasional distress.

The furniture of a den should be simple and firm. Mission furniture is particularly well suited to this room. A divan or sofa should be one of the chief furnishings. A substantial table and a low, roomy chair should also demand a place, and if there is a stool to put before the chair, so much the better, for a man is seldom so happy or so comfortable as when his feet point ceilingward.

Pictures of football and baseball teams, trophies of sport and emblems of war may constitute the decorations of the walls if they have any real significance for the owner.

THE DOUBLE TRAIN.

A new train seen lately consisted of two trains, each quite separate, and endless in points. A very lovely evening dress of deep orange charmeuse had this double tail. One was of the orange charmeuse, and was just a continuation of the dress itself. The second train was of lemon-colored mousseline de soie, and started from a drapery at the waist, which came down one side and round the back of the frock, falling into a train the exact size and shape of the satin one. When well done this has a vedy pretty as well as a very novel effect.

TEMPER AND GOOD LOOKS.

Thoughtfulness for others and unselfishness are great beautifiers, for all perfection of skin and feature will not make up for an unlovely expression due to a hard heart.

Every girl is not possessed of an amiable temper or a pretty face, but every girl may try to improve both her temper and her face. She may not be able to alter the shape of her nose or the color of her eyes, but if she cultivates an interest in those about her, if she tries to make the world happier for those with whom she is brought into association, she can scarcely fail before long to win a pleasing expression of countenance that will cause physical defects to be forgotten. And, after all, there is some satisfaction to be got out of working on one's disposition and cultivating the higher self.

MOLASSES GINGERBREAD.

One-half cup molasses, one-half cup sugar, one-quarter cup shortening, one egg, one-half cup milk or cold tea, one teaspoon soda, one and one-half cups flour, one-half teaspoon salt and spice to taste.

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Pure Silk Messalines; 40 street and evening shades; also black & white; value 59c **35c**

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