

LYING OR DEAD. A POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATION. BY HUGH CONWAY.

CHAPTER XXV. I have said little or nothing of Claudine for a long time; simply because this is not a love tale; certainly not the story of our loves. Nevertheless, during my absence, letters had passed between us nearly every day. I did not tell her exactly why I had named her 'Claudine,' but for my own sake I let her know that my apparent friendship for Chesman was part and parcel of the work I was engaged upon. She was content to take me at my word, to wait and trust. She was at Cheltenham, staying with her guardian, the terrible old general. Although he had washed his hands of her, she was welcome to come to his house, so long as she did not bring that young adventurer in her train. The truth is, the old soldier and his sister loved her dearly. Perhaps, had I known that, I should have kept my temper on the occasion of that stormy interview. So I wrote a long letter to Claudine. Perhaps, as I thought of what was before me, an unusually tender one. However that may be, the only portion of it which concerns this tale was the postscript, in which I asked her to telegraph at once, and if she could let me know the name of Lady Estmere's dressmaker twenty years ago. I did not explain why I made the request, knowing that Claudine would stress at its importance. The telegram came about noon the next day. 'Always the same, Madame Bianchi, Regent street.' I went in search of Holtwell, and asked him to accompany me to the unknown regions I most explore. We called at the great dressmaker's feeling terribly shy and ill at ease as we passed through the glass doors which opened upon the mysterious land of millinery. I insisted that Holtwell should be the spokesman. His greater age would carry weight and win confidence. He reluctantly consented, and with a furtive glance around him, advanced, and asked one of the young ladies behind the counter if we could see Madame Bianchi. Madame was particularly engaged at present. Did we call by appointment? The young lady eyed us curiously. No doubt the appearance of two tall, grown, able-bodied men in such an establishment was unprecedented. 'We did not have an appointment. Ah, then it was impossible to see when we could see madame. We would wait on the chance, as our business was of great importance. No we were recommended with advice, and sat down rather fearfully, feeling much like fish out of water. The young ladies in the shop looked at us suspiciously. Holtwell stuck his large brown hands in his pockets, stretched out his long legs, trying to look as much as he could as possible. But it was no use, we felt like criminals or deserters. It needed only two or three ladies to pass in and out, and give us a surprised glance as they swept by, to complicate our misery. 'This is very terrible,' Philip whispered to Holtwell. 'Is it? What shall we do?' 'I don't know. I believe those girls think we are buffets! I wish you wouldn't eye the dresses in that way. They think it the commencement of an inventory.' 'Can't you go and buy a bonnet, or a petticoat, or something,' he said, after a pause, 'just to show that we are honest men?' 'I wonder if Claudine would be ordered if I gave a few preliminary orders for the trousseau?' I said, laughing. 'Do something, for heaven's sake!' 'Send your name up to madame. She will see a lord, no doubt.' 'I will try,' he said sadly, and timidly approached one of the presiding goddesses. The tall man worked. The message was given and we soon found ourselves in Madame Bianchi's presence. She was a dark-eyed, clever-looking little woman, very quiet but richly dressed. Her hands, which were plump and white, always moved as she spoke, and looked as if engaged in smoothing out some imaginary wrinkle on a pianissimo dress. She received us gracefully and condescendingly, but it was perfectly clear she was quite aware of her own superior station in life. A peer in an accident of birth, but a great milliner is a gift from above. We apologized for our intrusion, and made known our errand. It was to learn if about a certain date, many years ago, a gentleman had ordered a replica of one of Lady Estmere's dresses. 'My books will show you,' she said. She rang a bell and gave orders that certain books should be brought her. She turned back page after page, passing her white fore-finger rapidly down each. Suddenly it stopped. 'It must be this,' she said. 'Here is the entry in the order book.' We looked over her index finger that arrested itself, and read— 'Mr. De-mil-toad, the same as Lady Estmere's, to be ready by next Friday,' said in advance. 'I remember the circumstances now I look at the entry,' said madame, as a gentleman called and told me his wife was so struck with her ladyship's dress that she must have one like it. I objected to make it, as we do not care to make two dresses alike. He insisted, and said his wife wanted to take it abroad. In fact, she had gone abroad now, so it was to be made to Lady Estmere's measure and after a few alterations if necessary.' 'He gave no name?' 'He gave no name.' 'It seems not that that did not matter, as you see he paid for it before it was made.' We knew all we wanted. At any time an inspection of madame's books would prove the truth of Mrs. Merion's tale so far as the two dresses were concerned. So thanking madame for her civility, we left her establishment. 'That,' said Holtwell, as we emerged from the glass doors, 'is a thing a single man should only be called upon to do once in a lifetime.' We walked across to his hotel where I had promised to lunch with him. 'Now,' I said, 'my task is done. The rest is your part.' 'You did not write to your father last night?' he asked. 'Certainly not. You had my promise.' 'You would like him to know about this?' 'As soon as possible.' 'Well, I have reconsidered the matter. He had better be told. Is he still in Devonshire?' 'Yes, I found a letter from him awaiting me yesterday.' 'Then we will settle your affairs first. We will go to Torwood tomorrow.' 'Of course I will. You will want my testimony. Besides, that paper never leaves me until I give it to Laurence Estmere.' I thought it very kind of Lord Holtwell to interest himself about my concerns. I told him so. 'Save me your thanks, Philip, and be-

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Hints and Scraps as in 'Fashion's Fancies—Style Defined as That Which is Becoming to the Wearer. A Glimpse of the Chatterer's Tint of Summer in the Salon, With Notes from the Gossip. There seems to be a tendency to return to the antique in dress, and a Grecian model is most sought. Soft, clinging drapery, falling in folds or plaits, and the classic form moving in graceful harmony, will certainly be a pleasant change from the extreme bouffant styles of the past few years. There seems, however, to be a little disposition to give up the bustle, but it is now worn over and less conspicuously. Much hatted, however, is allowed now, and every woman of taste can become the designer of her own costume, adapting it to her own individual style, and not one which belongs to another for its beauty, after all, that which makes one look pretty, and that costume which becomes the fashion, whether it be found in fashion plates or not. The skirt that would stand alone, our grand-mother's pride, is relegated to the past, and for yards, lousies are certainly lighter and cooler for summer wear. Linings are now shown with stripes of tufted chenille, and a wide depaite from the staid old Scotch gingham of former days, and printed with delicate cream tints, are widespread with small geometric or chintz figures and sometimes bordered, are much sought after. But of all wash material nothing is prettier or more durable than the checked ones. They come in black and white, blue or brown and white, and retain their freshness with each laundering. Skirts are full; they either fall in natural folds or are arranged in large, round plaits. Bodices are made with long waists and high busts, French corsets being worn in arranging full draperies, the front and sides of the skirt should be close and clinging, drawn tightly back with tapes and elastic, and at the back very bouffant, held out by steel rods and a large bustle. There seems to be no decadence of the rage for hood garments, and all colors are introduced into the designs, which reminds us of the head-bags which were the delight and wonder of our childhood. Paired and gathered waists are the only ones suitable for light fabrics; some are gathered around the neck and others are gathered at the waist. For slight young girls a waist and unique fastened down under a round belt, is becoming, the waist forming a plaited blouse open in the neck over a plain skirt. This is a pretty pretence for a girl of ten. FRENCH BLOUSE. White serge, with sapphire blue velvet and white lace, are the materials for this little princess frock. The collar, cuffs and tabs are of velvet veiled with satin. The front and sides of the bodice are covered with plaited lace. Velvet ribbon bows are piped at the throat and waist and on the back of the dress. Provide all parts with piping. Take up the darts in the front, and join the front, side, front and back, set the velvet covers underneath the front darts, and use the white, which is veiled with lace folds underneath the right front; the left front is hemmed upon it. A basque skirt eleven inches long is joined to the bottom of the waist; this box is plaited and lined with satin, and the skirt is formed in the front and back in each side where it is joined to the front and back; the middle breadth on the back is thirty-two inches wide and is gathered. Set the flaps, of which the under ones are of serge and the upper of velvet veiled with satin, on the sides. The plaited ribbon bows are in the front and back, and are two yards and three-quarters long; it is lined with foundation and sewed to a band at the top, and the band is sewed inside the waist at an inch and a half from its lower edge. Join the top and bottom of the flaps, trim them with a cuff covered with lace, and sew them into the armholes. FURONS. Among the fashions brought out this season in Paris are for wear over a low-neck dress forms on the left side a simple de chine drapery, extending from the shoulder to the waist. On the right side is a lace ruffe taken in at the neck, and falling in front and around the low neck in the back. Satin bows are on the shoulders. A bow is also on the breast to form the starting point for a long and narrow sash, and the front is taken to the left side and fastened over the hip under loops of ribbon. This style of neck trimming is very showy over a pink lillie dress, with the crepe de chine in the same color, and the bows of moss-green ribbon. The fashions in a muslin dress for a young girl is a simple ruffled in the back, and the front is carefully taken up over the shoulder where it is fastened under a bow of gauze ribbon. It is taken down the front of the waist, falls very full, and is draped under the right hip. Many dresses are of crepe or tulle surrounded by lace. On the neck, they have a piece of ribbon tied in a bow on the left shoulder. Another how fastens the plastron to the lower part of the waist. MANTON DRESS. Many materials in black and white are used, particularly for walking dresses. A stylish model shown is of rough goods in iron-gray, striped with tiny threads of white silk. The skirt has the stripes crossed, and is arranged in large, rounded plaits. The bodice is draped high to the waist, and is fastened with a full and long apron. The waist is fitted, hanging in the back, and has a round bustle. In front is a wide plastron, which turns over the neck to reverse shape. An additional piece in front forms a vest, and is also taken back in reverse shape. The open space between the revers is a chemise of green-silken serge. This buttons like a man's shirt. THE NEW DRAPERIES are arranged very long, both front and back, leaving both sides of the skirt unoccupied from the hips down. The front drape is very wide, and is caught up by means of extra deep plaits, some of which fasten to the belt, so high are they raised. The newest shapes of the perennial parasol are exactly game for, for the ribs curve outward at the extreme point, giving the effect of very curly epaulettes, or as though somebody had brushed a girl's hair the wrong way. In dress gowns the variety of canvas or etamine struck the most casual observer. Some are plain woven, others figured, striped and broken-checked and barred in the weaves, and the colors being solid. Others are striped horizontally, others vertically. The striping consists of lines of color, of velvet and plush, of boucle and bouclon and crocheted cord effects and all

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