

NARCISSA—AND A PHOTOGRAPHER

I

A MAN was walking down a country lane, carrying a camera. He walked lightly, almost jauntily, as if he were care-free and on a holiday. And he whistled as he walked. Country girls glanced at his whimsical face, half-smilingly, but he took little notice of them. His clear grey eyes, the eyes of a man with long sight, had a bird-like quality. He happened to be a lover of birds, and on this heavenly June morning he was looking for birds, the rarer warblers. Presently he passed a wicket gate leading into a wood. Above the gate was the usual sign: "Trespassers will be prosecuted." From the wood came the fluting of many warblers. The man stood still and listened. After a minute or two he walked back to the gate, leaned upon it, still listening, and then opened it. Possibly he never saw the sign. If he did, he disregarded the warning. A grass ride, sloping upwards, curved in front of him. A cock pheasant scuttled across it. A country gentleman would have known at once that this hanging wood was a game preserve. The grass ride had obviously been made for the convenience of "guns," who could hold straight upon high birds sailing over tree-tops. And about the wood, delightfully wild as it might appear, hung the unmistakable air of guardianship and the art of forestry. Any sportsman would have said to himself: "This belongs to a rich man."

The trespasser, too intent upon his hobby to think

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of anything else, ascended nimbly the sharp slope of the ride. A jay uttered a warning scream. The man stood still in a sanctuary of birds. Two jays scolded him. From this a sportsman might have made another deduction. Gamekeepers destroy jays which have a playful habit of sucking pheasants' eggs. Obviously, game preservation had ceased to be a matter of supreme importance to the owner of the wood.

The photographer left the ride and crept silently into a tiny grove of firs. He was stalking that rare bird, the crossbill, sometimes known as the German Parrot, but it evaded him. Finally, he abandoned a stern chase, and pursued a less shy quarry that might or might not be a Dartford Warbler. Below the clump of firs were patches of gorse; in and out of these the tiny bird flitted exasperatingly. To photograph any bird at reasonably close range exacts unflinching patience.

Within an hour the man discovered that he had lost himself; and he had taken no photographs. Also, it was uncomfortably hot. Trying to find his way out of the wood, he came upon a lovely pool, and at the farther end of it stood a rustic hut, built upon a platform. On the platform was a diving-board. The trespasser surveyed the hut at his leisure. As the door was wide open, he passed through it. Upon a table were cups and saucers and plates made of yellow Italian pottery; upon a hook on the wall hung a two-piece bathing-dress of vivid scarlet. A jaunty little cap surmounted this. A keen observer noticed that the hut had been used lately. No dust lay upon the pottery. He touched the bathing-dress and found it slightly damp. He apostrophized it: "A dark lady wears you."

Being fair himself, he admired dark ladies. His lively fancy played, lambent as lightning, about the hut. Yes; only a *brune* would wear a scarlet so vivid, and pour tea out of yellow cups. He sat down, wondering whether

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he dared bathe in this pool sacrosanct to some *brune*. The water wooed him seductively. Had she bathed that morning or yesterday? He decided that it must have been yesterday? He beheld her standing, a Narcissa, upon the edge of Nature's mirror, and falling in love with her reflected beauty.

He found a bath-towel, also slightly damp, and in the corner of it were two C's intertwined. He saw a big red silk umbrella such as old women still use in the South of France. A rough bookshelf held books. He glanced at the books and whistled softly.

"We are intrigued," he exclaimed.

Books in such a place reveal taste and character. Nobody carries books they don't read to a hut in the woods. He found a much-used Shelley, a book on birds, another on butterflies, *The Cardinal's Snuff-Box*, Bazin's *La Terre Qui Meurt*, and *Puck of Pook's Hill*. His eyes brightened and twinkled as they rested upon an original edition of Sam Butler's *Essays on Life, Art, and Science*. He began to experience a consuming desire to make the acquaintance of the *brune*. He felt that he could talk at his ease to her and with her. Upon a small desk were writing materials. He picked up a sheet of notepaper. In the corner was the same cipher, but no address. Staring at the intertwined C's, he spoke aloud for the third time:

"I hope her name isn't Charlotte."

"It isn't," said a voice.

The man turned swiftly. In the doorway stood a young woman, surveying an intruder with dark, derisive eyes. She was tall and slender, a creature of colour, sun-tanned, red of cheeks and lips, a dryad. The man removed his hat and stood abashed before her.

"Who are you?" she asked coldly. "What are you doing in my hut?"

"I'm a photographer," he answered. "For an hour

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or more I have been chasing what I believe to be a Dartford Warbler. I lost myself; but I found this hut."

"A gentleman would not have entered it."

"I agree."

"May I ask why you chase Dartford Warblers in a wood strictly private?"

"I photograph the rarer birds."

"That is your business?"

"My business and my pleasure. I'm on a holiday; and I combine both."

"Apparently you don't think it necessary even to apologize for this deliberate trespass?"

"But I do. If it will give you any satisfaction I will lie down and let you trample on me."

"Have you taken any photographs?"

"Not one. I have only taken a liberty for which again I apologize—abjectly."

She noticed that he spoke English with a slight accent.

"You are not English."

He bowed and smiled.

"Then I make allowances. You are perhaps a—German?" She had nearly said "a Hun."

"I am not. With your gracious permission, may I try once more to find the high road?"

"You will have no difficulty. That path leads into a carriage drive. Turn to the right, and you will pass through lodge gates."

"I am infinitely obliged."

As he turned to go the young woman said, sharply:

"Please wait a moment. You have your camera. As a matter of business would you care to take a photograph of this pool and the hut? Are you an expert?"

He smiled again.

"On that I can reassure you. Look!"

He took from his waistcoat pocket a gold medal, holding it up.

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“This is a gold medal, won by me last year in Norland.”

“Norland?”

“Norland.”

Cynthia Conklin, for that was her name, eyed him with greater interest.

“Are you, by any chance, in attendance on the Crown Prince?”

“In attendance? Hardly that. I am in his suite. I take photographs.”

“All is explained,” murmured Cynthia. She added pleasantly: “We knew that the Crown Prince was staying with the Duke, who is our nearest neighbour. Probably you thought this wood belonged to him.”

“I did not think, mademoiselle. In my country the woods, for the most part, are open to those who wish to walk through them.”

“How well you speak English!”

“I have studied in England. Shall I take the photograph?”

“It would be very kind of you.”

Immediately he went to work with professional promptness and skill. Indeed, Cynthia felt slightly humiliated, inasmuch as he displayed an intimate appreciation of the beauties of the pool which astonished her. He took three photographs, and then glanced at the nymph.

“If I could take you, Miss Narcissa——”

“Why do you call me that? Is self-love inscribed upon my face?”

“No; but your face reflected in this pool would justify such an assumption.”

She ignored the compliment, but was not displeased with it.

“Have you taken the Crown Prince?”

“Never. But I have taken his father and mother. Perhaps you have met the Crown Prince?”

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"Not yet."

"He hates being photographed."

"So do I."

"Good! I respect young ladies who hate being photographed."

She laughed gaily; all ice was broken. In the lightest tone, she asked the first intimate question

"Tell me why you dislike the name Charlotte?"

"I have an aunt of that name, a truly detestable person with a moustache. The Crown Prince called her——" he broke off abruptly.

"Yes——?"

"Narciss——forgive me. I am a law-breaker and a trespasser, but I obey the unwritten laws. It is an unwritten law that what princes say to their friends must never be repeated."

"Oh! You are a friend of the Crown Prince?"

He bowed politely. Cynthia's cheeks displayed a deeper damask.

"I'm quite sure now that I oughtn't to have asked you to take those photographs. It was cheeky of me."

"But—not at all."

"And dear me! I accused you of not being a gentleman."

"You were justified. An English gentleman can resist the greatest of temptations."

"Can he?"

"I am speaking of—curiosity."

As his eyes wandered involuntarily to the bathing-dress, she said, demurely:

"Have your curiosities been satisfied?"

"Not altogether. By the way, the Duchess is giving a garden-party to-morrow afternoon. Are you assisting?"

"We—mother and I—have not been asked to assist."

"I am sorry."

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Cynthia was at a loss to decide whether the speaker was sorry that he had touched upon a possible grievance, or, more probably, regretted that he would not have the opportunity of renewing an informal acquaintance.

“You will be there?” she asked.

“For my sins, yes. I hate parties; I hate formalities; I hate wearing uncomfortable clothes——”

At this moment a voice was heard.

“Cynthia!”

“I am here, mother.” She turned with a smile to the photographer. “You see my name is not Charlotte.”

“It—it couldn’t be.”

Mrs. Conklin sailed into view, an impressive personality. She expected to see a young woman in a scarlet bathing-dress. She saw instead a stranger upon whom her eyes rested interrogatively. Cynthia did the honours, if they can be so described.

“This is my mother, Mrs. Conklin. And this, mother, is——” She paused. The young man finished the sentence with a courtly bow.

“I am a humble photographer, madame.”

“This gentleman is a foreigner. He lost his way in our woods. I found him here. He has taken—to oblige me—a few photographs of the pool.”

Mrs. Conklin vouchsafed a foreigner and a photographer a careless nod. Cynthia added hastily:

“He is an expert. He—he has taken the King and Queen of Norland. He is at the Duke’s, in the suite of the Crown Prince.”

“Indeed! Really!”

Mrs. Conklin smiled graciously. She was one who believed in Divine dispensations. She had a glimpse, no more, of the beneficent finger of Providence. It seemed to beckon. Also she was a reader of the picture papers, a faithful subscriber to *The Prattler*. There was something, an elusive something, about this stranger

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which appeared familiar. But she was quite sure that she had never met him in the flesh.

"It is very hot," she observed. "My house is not five minutes distant. As—as you have been so kind in taking these photographs to—to oblige my daughter, will you allow me to offer you a little light refreshment, a lemonade, or, if you prefer it, a whisky-and-soda?"

Cynthia betrayed surprise. The man bowed again.

"I am thirsty," he confessed. "I should be a churl to refuse so kind an invitation."

The three strolled towards the house.

II

It was a pretentious house, built regardless of expense (and taste) by the late John Conklin, a Liverpool shipping magnate. But it stood in enchanting gardens. Without provocation—other than her own sense of the dramatic—Mrs. Conklin satisfied more curiosities. As the three sat down in the shade of a mighty elm the lady of the house became biographical.

"My late husband built the house—a mistake."

That happened to be her guest's opinion, but he didn't say so. Volubly, Mrs. Conklin explained what she meant. It was a grievous mistake to spend well-earned money in a county, rather remote from London, ruled over by a Duke.

"We hardly realized," continued Mrs. Conklin, "that this is called the Duke's country. He is supreme here. The Duchess called. I returned her call. There the matter ended."

Cynthia looked distressed, perhaps unreasonably.

"We are regarded," said Mrs. Conklin, "as carpet-baggers. We paid a large price for the property; we bought it from an impoverished kinsman of the Duke."

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We have built cottages ; we have improved the estate ; we have, in a word, done our duty——”

She paused. Her guest said, sympathetically :

“Doing one’s duty is so tiresome.”

Cynthia, meanwhile, held her tongue. She sat, petrified with astonishment, staring at an indiscreet mother. Had a grievance become an obsession ? What would this foreigner think ? She eyed his whimsical face anxiously. Would he repeat to the local magnate these unwarrantable confidences ? Would they provoke laughter and sneers ? Desperately, she stammered out :

“M-m-mother——! Our p-private affairs c-can hardly interest a stranger.”

The stranger contradicted this promptly.

“But they do,” he asserted, gallantly. “It is a great compliment, I assure you. It makes me feel less of a ‘stranger.’” Then warmth informed his pleasant voice. “Also, it is to me, a foreigner, something of an outrage that two such charming ladies should not be welcomed, eagerly welcomed, anywhere—in any society.”

Mrs. Conklin beamed upon him. He continued as warmly : “The Duke and the Duchess are the kindest people. They cannot realize——”

He broke off, with a gesture. Cynthia perceived a man-servant, carrying light refreshment, and within earshot. Obviously, humble photographers from Norland had the instincts of English gentlemen.

Their visitor drank his lemonade slowly, talked agreeably upon the beauties of the garden, and then took his leave.

“I shall send you the photographs,” he said to Cynthia ; “and perhaps—who knows ?—we may meet again.”

Mrs. Conklin replied, majestically :

“We shall meet again, if you care to bring the photographs instead of sending them.”

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He smiled assent, lifted his hat, and left them. As his slight, graceful figure disappeared round a clump of rhododendrons, Cynthia exclaimed:

"Mother! Why, oh, why were you so outspoken? I—I feel humiliated. Everything you have said may be repeated."

"No."

"I say it may be. I see all those smart people laughing at us."

"My dear! You haven't guessed——?"

"What?"

"Our visitor is the Crown Prince of Norland! I seized what I believe," she spoke solemnly, "to be a God-sent opportunity."

Cynthia gasped.

"Stay here," commanded Mrs. Conklin. "I shall return in a minute, bringing with me," she concluded, triumphantly—"PROOF."

Cynthia fanned herself with a picture hat.

Mrs. Conklin came back with a copy of the current *Prattler*.

"There! Look for yourself."

She pointed to a group of personages. Standing next to the greatest gentleman in the realm was a tall, thin man wearing very uncomfortable clothes. Readers of *The Prattler* were informed that Their Majesties were entertaining at Buckingham Palace the Crown Prince and Princess of Norland.

"Are you satisfied, child?"

"I am stupefied," replied Cynthia.

III

That afternoon, just after tea-time, a belted and cockaded groom upon a magnificent horse delivered a large square envelope, addressed to Mrs. Conklin.

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Upon the flap of it was a ducal coronet. The envelope contained a card. Mrs. and Miss Conklin were invited to meet the Crown Prince and Princess of Norland upon the following afternoon between the hours of four and seven.

“At last,” murmured the widow of a carpet-bagger.

But Cynthia groaned aloud.

“We can’t go. This card ought to have reached us last Wednesday week.”

“A pardonable oversight. You will wear your hand-painted *crêpe-de-Chine*, and the cloak and hat to match.”

“I won’t go.”

“Don’t be absurd. Things have turned out according to plan. I’m not a fool, and I hope that I’m not the mother of a fool. At a glance I could see that His Royal Highness was interested in you.”

“Mother!”

“Your dear father spent thousands to get what he called publicity. We have got it for nothing. I look forward to seeing your photograph in the next *Prattler*.”

“You will be disappointed. I simply can’t go. If you admit that you fished for this card, it makes matters worse. I’m not a child, I’m twenty-three. For seven years we have been ignored by these swells. And why not? I suppose even dukes and duchesses have a perfect right to choose their own friends. We do know some very pleasant people.”

Mrs. Conklin said with apparent irrelevance:

“Next year we shall have tickets for the enclosure at Ascot. You wanted to go without them. How right I was to insist on our staying away! Everything comes to those who know how to wait. Take this card, put it upon your dressing-table——”

“So that the servants may see it.”

“That is a very vulgar remark.”

“It is,” assented Cynthia. “Perhaps this is a vulgar action.”

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She took the card from her mother, and tore it up viciously.

"That's that," she observed.

Mrs. Conklin attempted expostulation, coaxing, and finally more autocratic methods. But a modern miss was not to be budged from an impregnable position. The card had come too late. It did signify—publicity. And probably—ridicule. A sense of humour saved Cynthia from the ignominy of tears.

"To-morrow afternoon," she declared, "I shall cool myself in the pool."

At the last moment Cynthia did not change her mind. Mrs. Conklin rolled off in her Rolls-Royce. Her daughter said laughingly: "Good hunting, mother!" Then she slipped into a last year's frock and betook herself to the bathing hut.

IV

The hut brought confoundingly to mind a distinguished intruder and trespasser. Cynthia had no taint of snobbery, still the conviction that she had "interested" a Royal Highness thrilled. She made herself a cup of tea and drank it slowly in maiden meditation, trying hard to envisage a dual personality. If—if this photographer had been an ordinary man, and if the card to the ducal party had arrived, as it did, belatedly, would she have refused so peremptorily to accompany her mother? Reluctantly, she decided that she wouldn't—she would have gone. Back of her mind was the dread of meeting the Crown Prince. The gulf between them couldn't be bridged, even in fancy.

She had liked him; he had liked her.

Being a practical young woman she consoled herself with the reflection that a great personage would be

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“ nice ” to her mother. And others, the swells, would govern themselves accordingly. The Duchess, later on, might ask Mrs. Coplain to luncheon. Poor Mother! What balm that would be!

Cynthia washed up her tea-things and glanced at her wrist-watch. It was past five; she had eaten a light tea. It would be quite safe to bathe at six, so she undressed leisurely and put on her pretty bathing-dress and the cap. Had she been stupid not to go to this great party?

Suddenly she heard a whistle. In a jiffy she had donned a beflowered bath-robe, because she had recognized the whistle.

It was HE. Did royal privileges and prerogatives enable a man to be in two places at the same time? Before she could answer this question, a mere photographer was explaining his presence.

“ I have brought the photographs, my dear Narcissa. Your butler told me that I should find you here.”

“ I am here,” replied Cynthia. “ But why aren’t you *there* ? ”

“ I escaped,” he replied, lightly. “ I hate these functions. May I ask why *you* weren’t there ? ”

“ You saw my mother ? ”

“ I did.”

“ I can’t understand how *you* escaped.”

There was the faintest emphasis on the personal pronoun, sufficient—so Cynthia thought—to indicate that an *incognito* had ceased to be such to her. Her visitor, however, whether designedly or not she couldn’t determine, picked up friendly acquaintanceship where he had left it. He replied coolly :

“ I did my duty for an hour. May I show you the photographs ? ”

“ Please.”

They were beautifully mounted.

“ But how quick you have been.”

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“ Oh, well, we must give credit to an underling.”

An underling!

Was that a discreet hint to her? He continued in the same cool tone:

“ You are about to bathe. How I envy you! Why didn't I bring a bathing kit?”

By this time, mischief was lurking in Cynthia's active mind and dancing in her eyes. Obviously, this whimsical gentleman expected her to play her part in a joyous little comedy.

“ We have a kit in that chest. If you like, you can take it and put it on. You will find towels, too. You can undress at the other end of the pool behind those bushes. I shall jump in and—and swim about till you join me. Can you swim?”

“ Can I swim? Can you dive? Let me see Narcissa take a header.”

She hesitated. Almost defiantly, she cast from her the beflowered robe, stood still for a second, ran to the board, executed a hop, skip, and a jump—and disappeared. When she emerged, his Royal Highness was clapping his hands.

In less than five minutes he was swimming beside her. He dared to splash her! She splashed him. He challenged her to a race, and beat her by a short head. She suspected that he was not putting out his full powers. When he chaffed her, she chaffed back. And so a most beguiling half-hour passed.

v

We behold them dressed and greedily devouring the cakes which Cynthia had left untouched at tea. They talked seriously of books and birds. They wandered, hand in hand, so to speak, down the less-frequented paths of life, a delightful vagabondage. Was Narcissa

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reckless? Cynthia Conklin asked herself that question. Had this stranger cast a spell upon her? Why did she recognize in him the man, not the fairy prince, of her dreams? Obviously, he was a man. He had done things. Cynthia had ever been disdainful of fairy princes a-riding down enchanted glades. And yet, enchantment seemed to have stolen upon her, and encompassed the pool, upon whose placid surface dragonflies scintillated.

Suddenly the spell was lifted.

"Aren't you glad," asked the man, "that you didn't go to the party?"

An English misreassumed drawing-room manners. Her madcap mood passed. She said, stiffly:

"Of course, you asked the Duchess to send that card?"

"You are mistaken. I happened to mention where I had been and the names of my two hostesses. The Duchess said: 'How very thoughtless of me! I forgot to send them a card.'"

"Oh-h-h!"

"I was so disappointed when you didn't come. May I ask for the second time why you stayed away?"

"Surely you can guess?"

"But—I can't."

As he spoke he looked her straight in the eyes. It was impossible to accuse him of insincerity or, a much milder word, of dissembling. She could read, too, in his eyes not merely admiration (she was accustomed to that), but something more than liking. A vague distrust of him and of herself stirred within her. It was possible that royalties allowed themselves extraordinary licence.

"You see, I—I know who you are."

"Do you?" he replied, gravely.

"We, mother and I, found your picture in *The Prattler* a few minutes after you left us. Then the card came. It was very kind of you, but I had met you as a man,

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as I met you again this afternoon. I felt that I couldn't meet a personage."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"A personage? Are there any personages left? We have instead personalities. I should like you to think of me as a personality."

Miss Conklin replied:

"It is ridiculous, sir, for me to think of you at all."

"Pray don't call me 'sir.'"

She remained silent. After a pause, in a gentler tone he went on:

"For my sins, as I said before, I have to observe the formalities in public. But in private I cast from me such idiotic shackles. Come—let us begin again. Fate ordained that we should be friends. I—I plead for your friendship. We have been happy together. Can you deny that?"

"N-n-no."

"May I come back to-morrow?"

She temporized.

"Why didn't you tell me at once who you were?"

His grey eyes twinkled.

"Wouldn't that have spoiled the fun? Is there so much romance in life that we can afford to flout it when it pops up unexpectedly? Let us be perfectly honest with each other."

She retorted bravely:

"But it was not quite honest of you to pretend to be a photographer."

"Let my work as a photographer answer that." He pointed to the photographs. "Do you think that gold medals are awarded to amateurs?"

"You have made it so difficult for me to think at all."

"But that is the greatest compliment I have ever received. My precious medal is dross. If I were a vain man——"

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“ Aren't you ? ”

“ Certainly not. ”

Cynthia frowned. If royalties elected to travel at excess speed, they must pay the penalty. She said, acidly :

“ Perhaps you have been given a gold medal for supreme proficiency in the art of saying what you don't mean. ”

He frowned in his turn.

“ My worst enemy has never accused me of that. May I light a cigarette ? ”

As he lit it, she contemplated flight. It was against etiquette to dismiss summarily this importunate prince, but she might plead an excuse for leaving him. The feeblest of excuses left her lips.

“ I have some letters to write. ”

“ Dear Narcissa, will you write to me ? ”

Futile rage tore discretion to tatters. She jumped up, quivering.

“ Am I to address them care of the Crown Princess of Norland ? ”

“ A waste of ink. They would reach me without that. ”
She curtsied.

“ I have the honour, sir, to wish you—good night. ”

“ Good afternoon, Miss Conklin. I hope to have the honour of wishing you good morning—to-morrow. ”

She had the last sprightly word.

“ We have been playing together, sir, in—shall we call it a castle in Spain ? In Spain to-morrow never comes. ”

With that Narcissa fled.

VI

Mrs. Conklin reached home in time to dress for dinner after three hours of linked sweetness long drawn out. Mother and daughter met in the drawing-room.

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"I have enjoyed, child, a triumph."

"Dear mother, I am so glad."

"Yes. Really, I feel almost dithored with excitement. I talked alone with the Crown Prince for five minutes. The Duchess was kindness itself. The Duke spoke about our covert shooting. *And the whole county looked on.* Really, I could almost sing my '*Nunc dimittis.*' And all this civility and courtesy I owe to the Crown Prince."

"Ah! The Crown Prince. You saw him?"

"My dear, he is coming here to-morrow. It is arranged."

"He likes our lemonade."

Mrs. Conklin laughed.

"Cynthia, I made the most absurd mistake, but it led to my triumph. The man in *The Prattler* picture, whom I took to be the Crown Prince, is his great friend, Oscar Fridhoff, the famous naturalist. He was there. I went up to him and curtsied. I addressed him as your Royal Highness. In that picture the real Crown Prince is standing *between* our King and Queen. When I discovered my mistake I need hardly tell you that I was overwhelmed with confusion. The Crown Prince made a joke of it. He said: 'Madame, you have curtsied to the right man.' Everybody in the charmed circle laughed. Finally, I laughed myself. Well, child, it seems that Mr. Fridhoff——"

"Mister Fridhoff?"

"He appears to have no title."

"He doesn't need one," murmured Cynthia.

"What was I about to say? Yes—Fridhoff—they all call him Fridhoff, or Oscar—Fridhoff had told the Crown Prince about our herbaceous border. To-morrow, at eleven, Fridhoff is bringing the Crown Prince to see them. After all, you will wear your *crêpe-de-Chine.*"

"I think I will," said Cynthia.

"And now, child, prepare yourself for the greatest

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surprise of all. This Fridhoff must have spoken to the Crown Princess of you."

"Of me?"

"Of you. Her Royal Highness has expressed a wish to meet you. We lunch at the Castle the day after to-morrow."

"Mother——! You make me dizzy. Aren't we all travelling too fast?"

Mrs. Conklin replied augustly:

"Royalty sets its own pace."

"Did—did Mr. Fridhoff pay you any attention?"

"He disappeared. I hardly spoke to him after our first comical meeting. I cannot understand his leaving such a very distinguished gathering; can you?"

Cynthia blushed.

"Mr. Fridhoff and I bathed together in our pool."

"Good gracious! What next?"

"At the pace we are going," said Cynthia, "that question may be answered—to-morrow."

And it was.