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Frailties of fashion, or, the adventures of an Irish smock

interspersed with whimsical anecdotes of a Nankeen pair of breeches

Containing among a great variety of curious connexions between the most celebrated Demi Reps and Beaux Garçons upon the ton, the secret memoirs of Madame D'Eon as related by herself ...

London, 1784

Chap. III.

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C H A P. III.

Scenes in high life, three weeks after marriage.

One o'clock—Lord Lovesport's parlour, tea-equipage, newspapers, &c.

Enter Lord Lovesport, yawning.

WHAT a damn'd ill run of luck last night—surely I have done something to offend the bones, they will not be reconciled to me. Could I suppose them Dutch toys, and they possessed all the phlegm and resentment of their countrymen, it would be in vain to sue for peace; but if they are of British manufacture, I hope they will prove as generous as the country that has patronized them, and I will endeavour to make an *armistice* with them this evening, to pave the way for a lasting friendship.

Enter

Enter Lady Lovesport.

Why, my lord, you rise early; what time did you come home?

Lord L. I believe it was between five and six.

Lady L. Then I can read your fate. I know your lordship never comes away till your last Rouleau's lost. I did not get into my chair before eight, and yet I cannot boast of any success.

Lord L. Your usual luck, I suppose.

Lady L. Semper eadem—worse and worse—lost every farthing, and owe colonel Slip five hundred—heigh ho!

Lord L. Well, your ladyship can have none of me, I promise you. You have had already two quarters pin money, though we have been married but three weeks: if you were to go on at this rate, madam, you would ruin the

B

Exchequer.

Exchequer. [*takes up the newspaper in a passion, and reads.*]

Lady L. My lord, what news? you seem to smile.

Lord L. Laughable enough, just as I expected, and very apropos. Lady Squander detected in an amour with Sir Harry Target, in paying a debt of honour with honour itself.

Lady L. Poor lady Squander! how I do pity her, how I do feel for her; and how can my lord be angry with her; if he will not allow her necessaries; necessity will drive a woman to any thing.

Lord L. A pretty doctrine it must be acknowledged. So your ladyship places a woman's extravagance and folly in losing a thousand or two of a night, among the necessaries of life; and if her husband is not so great a dupe as to ruin himself in paying these
debts

debts, he becomes a cruel wretch, in not allowing her common necessaries. [*breaks off abruptly, and reads on, when he smiles again.*]

Lady L. Another detection, my lord, and another debt of honour, liquidated the same way *n'est ce pas?*

Lord L. No, this is of another kind: "The honourable Miss P——, who has for some time been in training by her father's equerry, to learn to *manage* and ride the great horse, including the great cabriole, has just rode off with him in a most graceful, not disgraceful manner, to where it is imagined, if they have not made too many *grand pas* upon the road, they are by this time united in holy wedlock."

Lady L. Well, I vow it is laughable enough. I wonder where that

B 2

parson

parson B—s gets his intelligence whilst he's immured in the King's Bench. But I always thought Miss P— would turn out a *prancer*, let her go what road she would.

Lord L. [*pulling out his watch*] I did not think it was so late; it is just three. I had appointments with lord Sweepstakes at Brookes's about this time. John, order the chariot. [*Exit.*]

Lady L. Well, I find his lordship will not listen to my wants; he is entirely cloyed with my charms. We have been married but three weeks, and have had separate beds for this fortnight. After a woman has lost her influence over a husband, it is in vain endeavouring to reason with him upon money matters, more especially, when he is in a run of ill luck himself, which I knew to be the case from lord Sweepstakes,

Sweepstakes, though he did not acknowledge it. Let me see, I have but one expedient left, I have already borrowed every farthing Poundage the steward had, and my jewels are in pledge: luckily this is a court mourning and they are not missed. I'll dress immediately, and repair to Ruby the jeweller's in Bond-street; he has been punctually paid for my wedding trinkets, and cannot refuse me any order I shall give him. [*retires to her dressing-room.*]

Heavens! how shockingly I look this morning—well, I vow, ill-luck and fitting up late will ruin the finest complexion in the world;—thanks to Warren and Bailey, or we should appear like frights indeed! But then one's eyes lose their sparkling, and the spirits flag, that should animate them—

B 3

heigh;

heigh ho! Minionet, give me a little *Eau des Anges* to recruit them. (*drinks a glass*) This is pleasant liquor, and the French are so happy in their names they give their cordials, that no woman of fashion need be ashamed to take them; for who could think that "The water of angels" could be a dram, or even a cordial?

Ensign Cropt-ear, *announced.*

En. I hope I meet your ladyship in perfect health, and that the fatigue of last night was not too great for you? —but the question is quite unnecessary the moment I view those enchanting eyes, that bespeak health and spirits, and—

Lady L. Oh, Captain! pray a truce with your compliments; how can I be well this morning, after such a
mor-

mortifying run of ill-luck last night to the Colonel?

En. What might your ladyship lose to him?

Lady L. My loss, Captain, I should not mind; but I am in his debt.

En. How much pray, my lady?

Lady L. Five hundred.

En. It is very lucky, my lady, he is just that sum in arrear with me; and if your ladyship will permit me, I will balance your account with mine.

Lady L. You are extremely obliging, Captain—but I am at present out of cash, and his lordship out of humour, so that I don't know when I shall be able to repay your compliment.

En. I intreat your ladyship not to let that give you a moment's uneasiness,

uneasiness: I have been very fortunate lately at Brookes's, and am so much in cash, that I have any sum your ladyship may want, at your ladyship's command, and I shall consider it as a singular honour that your ladyship will make use of it, otherwise it will lie dormant in my bureau.

Lady L. (aside) Very gallant indeed — I don't think I shall refuse his offer.

(The vis-a-vis announced.)

En. Which way is your ladyship going to make your morning tour?

Lady L. I am going to Ruby's, in Bond-street.

En. Then I will request the honour of attending your ladyship, as I want something in his way.

Lady L. Captain, your company will be extremely agreeable.

[Exeunt.]

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

A trip to Bond-street. The Ensign's politeness and generosity. A matrimonial phænomenon in high life, with a prelude to an amorous tete-a-tete.

WE may now suppose her ladyship and the Ensign seated in the *vis-a-vis*, and that he failed not seizing every opportunity of saying not only civil, but tender things, such as gratify female vanity, which constantly whisper 'tis all her due.

The coach stops at Ruby's, they descend, enter the shop, and begin to examine his jewels and trinkets; no sooner had the Ensign cast his eye upon a diamond heart, enterwoven with another, in the form of a true lover's knot, with this motto upon it, "*Les coeurs tendres s'unissent;*" than he immediately