

Ela

Excerpt 1

ELA I could roam about these old places all day. Isn't it all beautiful?

DONNA LUCIA Dream away, Ela--I shall wait till someone comes.

ELA Oh, to live among these leafy shades, ancient spires and sculptured nooks, a scholar's fairyland! And how lovely it must be by moonlight.

DONNA LUCIA I think you are remembering another moonlight, seen from the bridge of a certain yacht, and a certain "someone " who told you, as you listened to the chime of the ship's bell, that you looked like " the angel of the watch "-He was a flattering-tongued person, that " someone," "Lord Fancourt Babberley." But I don't want your mind fixed on things past, my dear. You need to look to the future. I've invested your poor father's money for you, and thanks to his forethought for his little girl-he has rendered you independent for life, and what is worse, independent of me.

ELA Independent!

DONNA LUCIA. But you won't be, Ela?

ELA No.

DONNA LUCIA. For I've grown to love the little orphan I met in such grief in a strange land so much, that I am not independent of her. So let's make a bargain. Let my dependance on you grow, and call me " Auntie," will you?

ELA Yes, Auntie, yes.

DONNA LUCIA How did your poor father come to have so large a sum of money by him like that? I thought he'd lost it all.

ELA Papa won it at cards.

DONNA LUCIA Won it at cards? When?

ELA During his illness.

DONNA LUCIA From whom?

ELA From Lord Fancourt Babberley.

DONNA LUCIA Is Lord Babberley a gambler, too?

ELA No!

DONNA LUCIA Oh!

ELA But, Auntie, if we should ever meet him, may I give it back?

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DONNA LUCIA I don't think he'd take it.

ELA Why not?

DONNA LUCIA It seems to me he took too much trouble to lose it! But I'm not going to speak for him.

Ah, my dear, all this has set me remembering now.

ELA Remembering, what about?

DONNA LUCIA Oh, all about—" a someone"-who-

ELA Oh! Do tell me.

DONNA LUCIA It was before I went abroad to Brazil. I was very young and he was very shy. He never called me "the angel of the watch," but he did get as far as a stammering compliment and a blush, and then

ELA And then?

DONNA LUCIA Then he was ordered off with his regiment.

ELA Without-ever

DONNA LUCIA Without-ever!

ELA Oh-Auntie!

DONNA LUCIA It was at a dance the evening before he went away.

ELA And you've never loved anyone since!

DONNA LUCIA I was a sentimental young lady in those days.

ELA What was his name, auntie?

DONNA LUCIA Frank Chesney—