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A Blue Eye Behind a Veil (excerpt)

Lucy A. Randal

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where he intended to stop. And under all circumstances, we can hardly blame him, when the car stopped so suddenly that she caught instinctively at his hand for support, for the squeeze he gave the plump, snowy palm! Any man in his senses would have done the same—it was such an inviting little lilly!

Out into the rain and darkness our two pilgrims sailed, scarcely more than able to steer their course by the glimmering reflection of the street lamps on the streaming pavements.

"Allow me to carry your basket, Miss, as long as our paths lie in the same direction," said Mr. Edge courteously, relieving her of her burthen as he spoke. "And—and—may be you'd find less difficulty in walking if you'd just take my arm!"

Well, wasn't it delightful? Mr. Edge forgot the wet streets and the pitchy darkness—he thought he was walking on roses. Only, as he approached his own door, he began to feel a little nervous, and wish that the lovely incognito wouldn't hold on so tight. Suppose Maria should be at the window on the look-out for him, as she often was, how would *she* interpret matters. He couldn't make her believe that he only wanted to be polite to a fair traveler. Besides his sweeping declarations of the morning—she would be sure to recall them.

As he stopped at the right number and turned round to bid the blue eyed a regretful adieu, he was astounded to see her run lightly up the steps to enter likewise. Gracious Appollo! he burst into a chilly perspiration at the idea of Maria's horror.

"I think you've made a mistake, Miss," stammered he, "this can't be your house?"

But it was too late—she was already in the brilliantly lighted hall, and turning round threw off her dripping habiliments and made him a low courtesy.

"Very much obliged to you for your politeness, sir."

"Why, it's *my wife!*" gasped Edge.

"And happy to see that you hav'nt forgotten all your gallantry towards the ladies," pursued the merciless little puss—her blue eyes (they *were* pretty) all in a dance with suppressed roguery.

Edge looked from ceiling to floor in vain search for a loop-hole of retreat; but the