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**"Sonia Goes East"**  
By Molly Thorp

"Do you mind that?" said Sonia. "It's not much use minding. It would be better if they still thought of him as a good planter."

The Macfarlane took Sonia to dine at Shabdla, as had been arranged. During the twelve mile drive, Mrs. Macfarlane told Sonia the history of the Boltons. In Benhar, everyone knew the history of everyone else. The salient fact about the Boltons was that they were much better off to begin with than most people, and Bill Bolton could turn anything to money.

"Elsie has made Shabdla perfectly lovely," Mrs. Macfarlane said. "It's most unusual."

It was certainly very unusual for Benhar, being furnished out of all semblance to a hussar's. There was none of the individual home-made look about the furniture. The drawing-room might have belonged to an expensive London flat. It realized a colour scheme completely carried out down to the jacket of a book lying on a table.

The Boltons were charming hosts. They moved about more than most Benhar people, and were easy to talk to. Sugar cane, however, was a topic from which as planters, they could not long be kept at this season.

"Just look at us," said Elsie, after they had had their coffee in the drawing-room. "A nice provincial dinner party, men on one side and women on the other. I did think we might keep them off sugar, on Sonia's account, Bill!"

Her husband finished what he was saying and turned, looking apologetic.

"It's interesting," said Sonia. "I thought that when indigo was finished the planters were more or less finished, too. You seem to be quite as busy now with sugar."

"We're busy enough," said Bill. "but don't you believe the old days are back again. While this district was still planted, planters were considered moderately useful for making roads, developing land, keeping private dispensaries for the public good and all that sort of thing. Now these needs are mostly supplied, our value has gone. We grow sugar for our modest living, but we don't count on the future."

"ing?" said Sonia.

"Still sugar does give you a Nym-pore, for the present, yes. She isn't thinking of starting a rival mill at Mynpore, is she, Mrs. Macfarlane?"

Sonia's week at Dumraon passed and there was no news of Mr. Gedge's return. Mrs. Macfarlane said they would be glad to have her indefinitely but she began to worry a little about him and Mynpore.

"I think I ought to send a man to find out when he's coming," she said.

"What's the use. He may be miles beyond the railway. Mrs. Gedge always said that if Hosain had gone with him, she didn't worry. Hosain would know exactly what to do if he thought anything had gone wrong when your uncle was out, and would send a message."

Sonia had been at Dumraon over a fortnight when Nursing Lal suddenly arrived one morning. He had come in the car, with Khudair Bux. Sonia went out into the veranda to see him. She came back very soon to ask Mr. Macfarlane to come out.

"Nursing Lal is very much upset, and I want to get his story right. It's something about Babu Mahabir Singh wanting Uncle Justin to pay some rent at once."

A Writ For Rent?

Mr. Macfarlane heard Nursing Lal through, and looked rather concerned.

He said to Sonia, "It seems the rent is considerably overdue, and he's threatening to sue your uncle."

"What does that mean?"

"It doesn't sound to me like Mahabir Singh's own doing. He is my landlord, too. His son, Rajendra Singh, quite a different sort, has been taking charge more and more. Nursing Lal says he hasn't the cash in the factory, because there is so much owing to your uncle from the peasants. He is supposed to collect the rent from the villagers for a commission. It's unfortunate he should be away, because he could settle the matter."

**DR. CLAYTON A. BAXTER RETURNS TO HEAD MT. A. DEPT. OF PHILOSOPHY**



SAKENVILLE, N. B., Sept. 12 — Mount Allison University reports with a great deal of satisfaction the return of Dr. Clayton A. Baxter to his post as head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology.

Dr. Baxter received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Victoria College, University of Toronto, and the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy Degrees from the University of Toronto. After three years teaching in the United States he took a post-graduate year at Harvard.

From 1922-1927 he was lecturer in Education at Mount Allison University and from 1946-1943 he was acting head of the Philosophy Department. He then proceeded overseas with the Army Personnel Selection Service and when the war closed joined the staff of the Khaki University. Last year he did veteran personnel work at McMaster University.

Dr. Baxter has written many articles for philosophical journals and is a member of the American Philosophical Association.

In addition to his duties as Department Head he will act as Dean of Men at Brunswick House.

Apparently the Babu won't wait and intends to file suit at once, if he isn't paid. I don't think the only thing is to explain to Briery who would deal with it."

"I'd better take the car and go to Siwa at once, then. Nursing Lal ought to come too, as he has the details."

Mr. Macfarlane looked really concerned.

"I wish I could do it for you, but of course I can't interfere in such a matter."

"I don't mind in the least, if I can do any good. I suppose Mr. Briery doesn't bite."

"Oh, Briery's a thoroughly nice fellow. He will appreciate that you're doing it for your uncle, and be as helpful as he can."

Mrs. Macfarlane came out, and her husband explained the situation. "This is what comes of being a saint and neglecting Mynpore," she remarked, without malice. Then she turned her mind to the practical details.

"You must go to the Bluetts, and send Nursing Lal over to ask when Mr. Briery can see you. Mrs. Bluet will be glad to put you up if necessary. Of course, you'll come back to us. Jim what about sending a man with a letter to Mr. Gedge?"

Nursing Lal understood, and said, in Hindustani, "If the Misahib will write a letter, we can stop at Mynpore for the person who is accustomed to taking messages to the Sahib in the jungles. He can catch the afternoon train from Siwa."

"Then you'd better write as urgently as you can," said Mrs. Macfarlane. "You might say there's a cholera epidemic in the dhat. That would be more certain to fetch him than anything to do with his affairs."

Sonia drove the car, with Nursing Lal beside her, answering her questions. He broke a silence by remarking, "It was to the son of Mahabir Singh that the Sahib gave his beautiful red cow."

Sonia did not answer. She had thought of that, too. Nursing Lal evidently felt as she did about it, and she found that she had come near to sharing his view of Uncle Justin. There was certainly something about Uncle Justin. She no longer wanted him to be like other people, but she wanted to justify his difference. That was why she had said nothing about the incident of the heifer to Mrs. Macfarlane.

It was a comfort to have an ally who would have found it just crazy, in Nursing Lal.

She began to think carefully what she would have to say to the austere young man whom she had seen only at Aunt Emily's graveside that morning in January.

**CHAPTER X**

Mrs. Bluet seemed to find it both natural and delightful that Sonia should arrive without notice, uncertain how long she would stay.

"Of course you must stay the night," she said, as they went into the house with her bundle of Maltese poodles ambling suspiciously round Sonia's feet. "We've had so little of you yet."

She habitually took much trouble to be pleasant that people sometimes, quite wrongly, thought her insincere. She fussed over Sonia even more now, because the meeting reminded them both of that last visit which was cut short by Aunt Emily's final illness.

Sonia told that she had to see Mr. Briery on a factory matter which couldn't wait till her uncle's return.

"Are you really helping in the factory? You clever girl! I'll send at once to Mr. Briery and ask him to tea. You can have your talk by yourself and then we'll go along to the Club for tennis."

"I think I'll go to his office for the talk. I'll ask if he can see me early in the afternoon, so that it won't interfere with anything else."

(To Be Continued.)



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