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### Moral for the Immortal

By JOHN E. DE ROSI  
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WSU Service.

FRANKIE AMORY had never been in love. He did not believe in love. He said there was no such thing. At least, not for him. He was right.

For Frankie, alas, was a professional gentleman, a gigolo—a genteel swindler, clever at the precarious art of blackmail. He could not afford to believe in love. It would not be wise.

But Frankie, despite all his wisdom, had erred, and the police were after him. He had made the sad mistake of pretending to make love to a police commissioner's wife, a very wealthy woman. Unfortunately, however, her husband happened to be a remarkably perceptive man and in a short time Frankie was very hurriedly leaving the city.

Frankie alighted at a summer resort high in the mountains. He took a room at the leading hotel and slept through most of the day. That night, at a costume masquerade he met Mrs. Winters, a wealthy, middle-aged divorcee. Frankie immediately went to work.

That weekend he was a guest at a house party in the great white castle on the mountainside that was the Winters' mansion. And there he met Stephanie. "He had been strolling among the guests with the possessive and almost girlish Mrs. Winters and they had come upon a large group at one end of the drawing room. Mrs. Winters playfully grasped one of the men by the sleeve."

"This is my bad, bad nephew Lyle," she said to Frankie, smiling broadly. "Lyle, this is Mr. Amory."

"Lyle has brought a charming young thing for the week-end," said Mrs. Winters. "I hear he has been paying a great deal of attention to her in the city." She smiled insinuatingly.

Frankie could catch only an occasional glimpse of the shoulder of the girl beyond Lyle. She was almost entirely screened by the men about her. Lyle turned toward her. "Oh, Stephanie. . . ." The girl emerged from the circle smiling. Her eyes met Frankie's.

Frankie gasped. His heart seemed to stand still.

The next morning he sought out Stephanie. "I must talk to you," he implored. "Can't we walk some where?"

She nodded eagerly, her eyes very bright, very innocent, very young. "I'll get a jacket—" She touched his arm in a gesture of confidence—"I won't be a moment!"

He watched as she hurried away. She was so sweet!

They followed a little path up the mountainside and sat for hours in a cleared space overlooking the broad, far valley below.

After dinner they went for a drive. In the gradually gathering darkness they drove slowly up the mountain road. Passing a smooth stretch of gravel Frankie accelerated the car, and the wind whipped about them. Stéphanie laughed, moving close to him. He laughed with her. His arm, in an unconscious motion, dropped over her shoulder. She leaned her head against the soft pad of his coat.

Farther on they stopped and watched the moonlit valley below. They sat there a long while. Once Stephanie said, "Oh, Frankie, isn't it grand! Couldn't you just stay here forever and ever?"

He looked at her. Everything within him seemed to fall away and leave him limp and lifeless. He took her hand. "Stevie," he whispered, "you're adorable!"

She looked shyly up at him. She said nothing, but he could feel her move to him. She held her eyes to his lips. "I like you, too, Frankie. . . ." She came very close to him. The moon's light was silver on her moist, parted lips, luminous from her night-shaded eyes.

He drew her to him, tight, tight. He could feel her soft fingers over his face, tracing the line of his lips, his chin. His words were lost in the silken cascade of her hair, but she heard them. "I love you, Stevie. I love you. . . .

Lyle Winters slumped down in a chair with a shrug of resignation. Stephanie came across the room drawing on her gloves. She was a different Stephanie. There was an alien air of icy briskness about her. She spoke calmly to the man in the chair, but her tone was brittle. "Well, did you get the dough from your aunt?"

Winters nodded. He reached into an inside pocket and brought forth a neat parcel of currency. "Got the letters?"

"Yeah." Stephanie opened her handbag and produced a packet of envelopes. "Let's have the dough."

Envelopes and money changed hands. Winters sighed with relief. "Why the big rush, anyway?" he asked. A horn tooted outside.

The girl hobbled toward the window. "The fish are biting."

Winters rose and went to the window. "Amory?"

The girl nodded. "Yeah." She crossed the room and paused by the door. "Well, so long." She smiled. "And say, never write love letters to girls you don't know anything about." And she was gone.

Winters saw Stephanie bend over and kiss Frankie. He watched as the car slid down the driveway.

"Well," he murmured, half aloud. "I wonder how much she'll get out of that sucker. . . ."

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SNAPDRAGONS ARE EASILY GROWN.

Many beautiful flowers are hand-capped by a delicate constitution which prevents their wide use, but snapdragons, or antirrhinums, are not one of them. On the contrary they are one of the healthiest and most vigorous annual flowers, and will respond to good treatment with a blaze

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