

THE GIRL IN GREEN

By George Munson.

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"There she is! 'The Girl in Green,'" said John Latham, unveiling his newly completed painting.

Miss Agnes Manton uttered a little repressible scream.

"Why, John, dear, that is—that is perfect!" she exclaimed. "Only—I



Smash! Rip! Rip! Rip!

am sure you have grossly flattered me, John."

"Not a bit of it, my dear," protested her fiance. "You are prettier far than my poor efforts have shown you on the canvas. And this picture is going to make my reputation."

Heaven knew he needed that it should. John was a struggling artist, just rising out of the ruck. He was twenty-nine; Agnes was only two or three years younger, and they had been engaged for several years. A struggling artist had little chance of making enough to support a wife in London,

However, though it had not been sold, one of John's pictures had been accepted for exhibition by the Royal Academy the summer before, and he had little doubt that this would be "hung." Perhaps it would attract the notice of a rich purchaser. Then they could be married.

"How much is it we said we wanted, dear?" asked John. "A thousand pounds, wasn't it, to begin."

"We could do it on five hundred, John," answered the girl.

"But we agreed that we wanted a thousand pounds to fit out our house nicely with antique furniture"—like most poor people John had extravagant aspirations—"and really start in comfortably and defy the wolf?"

"That would be nice," Agnes answered.

"Very well, dear. I shall insure this for a thousand, and I shall place that price upon it," said John. "And I won't take a penny less, either."

A month later, to his delight, John received an intimation from the Royal Academy to the effect that his picture was to be placed on exhibition. On Varnishing Day he and Miss Manton went to look at it. Both feared that it had been "skied." But it had not been skied. On the contrary, it occupied a very prominent position low down, next to the door leading from the first to the second salon.

"Just the place where it will attract attention!" exclaimed Agnes joyfully. "Everybody will see it staring at them the moment they come in at the door."

The day of the opening of the exhibition was one of fine weather, and vast crowds of fashionable and would-be fashionable people attended, together with a sprinkling who were genuinely interested in art. John and Agnes, inconspicuous among the crowds, watched their picture from a near place, while pretending to display interest in others.

"Hum! 'Girl in Green,' is she!" snorted a stout old gentleman, "'Girl