

**MISS TOMMY: A  
MEDIAEVAL  
ROMANCE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649650330

Miss Tommy: A Mediaeval Romance by Dinah Maria Craik

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**DINAH MARIA CRAIK**

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ROMANCE**



# MISS TOMMY.

A MEDIAEVAL ROMANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"JOHN HALFAX, GENTLEMAN."

[ F. 12 ]

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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1884.

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## PREFACE.

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IN the exciting blaze of modern fiction the glow-worm light of this simple and old-fashioned story almost seems to need apology; except that it is, in degree, a true story; and truth is always worth something. My heroine really lived—about half a century ago; she was very beautiful and charming; her name was Thomasina, and she was generally called "Miss Tommy."

Perhaps in these days, when so many women disdain to be such—contemning domestic life, and, by a curious contradiction, at once imitating and despising men, it may be excusable to have painted one who was "only a woman,"—nothing more.

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MISS TOMMY.

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PART I.



## PART I.

"You should call her Thomasina," said I, as I held in my arms a friend's first baby, whose dear and honoured father bears the old-fashioned name of Thomas, though suppressed into an initial.

"Thomasina?" repeated the young mother with polite hesitation. "Isn't it a—rather a long name? And if it were shortened—fancy her being called 'Tom' or 'Tommy'!"

"Why not? The most charming woman I ever knew was named Thomasina, and all her life was called 'Miss Tommy.'"

While I spoke the old days came back upon me—the days when I was a girl, who am now a



middle-aged mother. I saw her clear as if it were yesterday, my dear "Miss Tommy," whom I loved with a kind of passionate admiration, such as a girl often conceives for an elderly woman, and which she returned with the tenderness that warm childless hearts give, and are glad to give, to other people's children.

She rises up before me now—her pale pure face, her small dainty figure, her gentle way of moving and speaking, and her dear little soft hands—she had such pretty hands to the very last. But her beauty was not obtrusive. You might be in the room with her for ever so long and not notice Miss Tommy, till you came and sat beside her—found her out, so to speak; and then you were never likely to forget her. I never did, from the first hour when I made her acquaintance.

It was in a ballroom, of all places in the world—a London ballroom. I was sitting in a

corner, dull and silent, refusing to dance, for the only one I cared to dance with had just gone off to India, and as I was only nineteen and he two-and-twenty, our parents would not let us be engaged; they said we should change our minds half a dozen times during the three years that he was to be away—which might have been true, though it wasn't. So I wore the willow, half in sorrow, half in anger, for Charlie Gordon's sake, and thought myself the most miserable and ill-used girl in the world.

Everybody—that is, the “everybody” of a large family and a circle of affectionate friends—knew of my griefs and my wrongs. Some blamed, no doubt, and some sympathised, for Charlie was a universal favourite. He went away, luckily for him, and was out of it all; for me, I bore my heart-break as best I could, and tried to wear my willow—rather ostensibly, but with a dignified grace which raised me very much in my own

opinion, and even afforded me a certain consolation.

I can smile at myself now, at the folly of supposing that the whole order of things was to be turned upside down to make two lovers happy—two creatures, young and foolish, with not a halfpenny between them. And yet I am a little sorry for my old self too, for it was a very honest self, and its pain was a very real pain. I should not like to inflict the like on my own children without serious cause.

Enough of this, however, though it is not so much outside my story as it appears to be.

I had been sitting, silent and sullen, watching the couples waltzing round, and declining every partner who came up to me with a scarcely civil negative—they were decent young men enough, but oh, so inferior to Charlie!—when I heard some one beside me say, in a gentle tone, "Do you dislike dancing?"