

# **THE GAME**

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The Game by Lida Fitzgerald

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**LIDA FITZGERALD**

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By  
LIDA FITZGERALD

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## CHAPTER I.

Time—9:30 evening.

Place—New York.

Scene—Interior of drawing room,  
Drew mansion, Fifth Avenue.

Is there a more distressing situation for a proud and sensitive woman than to be forced to admit to herself that her only child, the pride of her heart, had suddenly drifted into the most dangerous atmosphere of day dreams. 'Twas a warm summer's night in June; all nature seemed at its best, and a cool breeze floated about the room and nestled in the lace draperies of the cozy corner windows. The stars shone bright and clear in the heavens, while the lights in the distance seemed to beckon one to follow the crowds along Broadway. A faint perfume of rose leaves that stood in a vase on the corner of the piano at the farthest end of the apartment scented the air, while a bronze cupid

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lamp sat in the center of the massive library table in the center of the room, balancing a cluster of tiny electric lights, that cast a weird reflection about the place, and rested in the silver tresses of Mother Drew, who seemed busily engaged with some embroidery work. Nothing save the steady ticking of the old hall clock served to break the solemn stillness. An occasional sigh escaped from the figure in the rocker, while her watchful eyes were occasionally turned towards the window, where a dainty bit of a girl lay curled up amid the pillows, like a tired child from its play, apparently indifferent to all about her. "Jane, why do you sit alone so much here of late? I have watched you for hours, and every night for the past two weeks I have found you staring blankly before you, seemingly unconscious to all about you. What have you on your mind, child, that even I, your mother, have hopelessly failed to unravel? I shall have to relate your strange actions to your father at once,



as I feel it necessary that you be placed in a good boarding school. Day dreams are not good for one of your years; besides, I fear your father has made a grave mistake in allowing you to be pampered and humored to everything, your every wish gratified, and your silly little head filled with nonsense and frivolities of life."

The little figure in the corner turned nervously about and wound her two beautiful arms over her well-shaped head, while her fingers toyed with a stray golden curl that had made its escape and nestled about her shoulder.

"Why, when I was a girl, my life was far different from yours. Indeed, I had a daily program made out which I was made to follow, never being allowed to be idle, only long enough to tidy myself up for the evening meal and to busy myself with a useful bit of lace until time to retire for the night. Jane, you are wasting your time in a reckless fashion, and I shall not permit you to go on in the rut any longer."

The dreamer closed her big, beautiful eyes to shut out the vision of life in a stuffy old boarding school, which was indeed anything but a pleasant thought to this queer child of nature, and rose from her seat in the window and proceeded to gather up a few stray books that lay about the room, discarded and unfinished by her, and placed them on the book shelves, and turned as if to leave the room. Angered by the seeming indifference of her daughter, she sternly demanded that she remain where she stood until she had finished talking with her. Reluctantly enough, she threw herself down upon the piano bench, running her tiny fingers over the piano keys, while the strains of a popular song ran through the room.

"Why, mother, I had absolutely nothing in particular on my mind; in fact, I do not really know of what I was thinking about, and I am sorry if I have made you unhappy here of late by my seeming indifference to all about me, but I am tired of spending my time day after

day within the four walls of my home with nothing to break the monotony of it all, my sole companion being yourself, and no young faces about me to occasionally while away the lonely hours, or that seemingly understand me. Besides, can you mate youth with old age, and expect either of them to be happy? I am only allowed such freedom that you and dad see fit to give me, and I believe that I lead the most secluded life of any of my girl acquaintances, and even though it be true that your life had been spent far differently than mine, I feel quite sure that it could not have been more empty or narrower than mine, and things have changed since you were a girl, and in this day and age people look upon life in an entirely different light; besides, I am young and full of life, and I want to live like the other girls of my age, and I only ask that which youth alone can understand and hunger for; to linger midst the gayety and brighter things, to come and go as I like without a bodyguard, to