

**THE SEMI-ATTACHED
COUPLE, IN TWO
VOLUMES, VOL. II**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649372737

The semi-attached couple, in two volumes, vol. II by Emily Eden

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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EMILY EDEN

**THE SEMI-ATTACHED
COUPLE, IN TWO
VOLUMES, VOL. II**

Entwined

THE
SEMI-ATTACHED COUPLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
'THE SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE.'

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Vol. II.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1860.

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Ed 285
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THE
SEMI-ATTACHED COUPLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE important morning came, and with it the four carriages and four, and Lady Portmore, resplendent in feathers and silks, and much to be admired, till Helen came in, looking like a genuine angel, so soft and white and bright. It is difficult for the unlearned to explain the component parts of a becoming dress, but some of the party observed that the embroidery on her silk pelisse must have been done at Lyons, to which Mrs. Douglas subjoined the oracular remark, "that it was a pity that it was white upon white."

There was also a quantity of shining lace, ordinarily, I believe, termed blonde, floating about, and forming an admirable cloud for the angel to float on.

“Well, Helen, you have gone and done it,” said Ernest.

“Am not I ‘bien mise’?” she said, blushing; “I have really taken a great deal of pains about my dress, that the people at N—— may approve of Lord Teviot’s taste. You know it is my first appearance there.”

“And mine,” said Lady Portmore.

“And mine,” added Mrs. Douglas, in a tone that made everybody laugh except Lady Portmore, and she went on, never minding.

“But, my dear Helen, we must not expect to attract much notice to-day. There stands the real lion.”

“My importance as a lion will not come into play till I begin roaring,” said Mr. G.; “and my constituents will be glad to have something to look upon, even if they deign to

listen to me. Really, my dear Teviot," he whispered as Helen moved on, "I never saw such perfection. I cannot take my eyes from her."

Such a speech from any other man would have given Lord Teviot a jet-black fit of jealousy, but it delighted him from Mr. G., who had established a right to make a little solemn political love to all the distinguished beauties of the day, and it was by no means a mere measure of custom and courtesy. He was as busy about his little flirtations, and as absorbed in his little sentiments, as if he had been a Lord Somebody Something just gone into the Guards, and doing his first London season, and nobody thought it odd. Half the women in London unblushingly paid court to him, and nobody said it was scandalous. If he got away from the House of Commons and came to a party, there was a sort of rustling sensation in the room, and two or three of his reigning loves immediately got

up and made a circle round him, and drew their chairs close to his, and hated each other, and were as eager in their rivalries as if he had been thirty years younger, and were not absorbed in politics eleven hours out of every twelve.

Lady Teviot had taken his fancy prodigiously, and his unrivalled powers of pleasing were exerted for this young creature as if he were her own contemporary. Again, Lady Portmore was puzzled—in another point she was baffled. She wished to be in the same carriage as the hero of the day, but a Lord and Lady Middlesex had arrived the night before, solely for the sake of attending the ceremony. They were a remarkably dull couple—he, a quiet, magistraty sort of man, who never went into society except on a great county occasion—she, a little crooked woman, with an unpretending manner and a mistaken bonnet; but with all these drawbacks his peerage was a century older than Lord Port-

more's, and upon a state occasion like this precedence must have its rights: so Lady Middlesex went with Lady Teviot in her carriage, which also contained Mr. G. and Lord Teviot—the lion and his keeper. Lady Portmore found herself actually doomed to the second carriage, with Mrs. Douglas at her side and Lord Middlesex opposite to her, and La Grange going to make a spring at the fourth place. But despair gave her energy, and she called to Ernest to take his seat.

“Thank you,” he said, “but I hate sitting backwards; and Miss Douglas, who does not mind it, has promised to change places with me if I go in her carriage.”

“Indeed I never did, Colonel Beaufort.”

“Well, but you will, I know; if not, I shall look so frightfully pale that it will spoil the show and distress the Mayor. Now, let us get in.”

“Come then, Stuart,” said Lady Portmore, “I will have you here.”

Lord Beaufort and Colonel Stuart, who had each their reasons for wishing to avoid the carriage which contained Miss Forrester, both hastened forward, and at last Lady Portmore was gratified by Mrs. Douglas's declaration that she should like to go in the fourth carriage, which had the honour of conveying her husband; so Lady Portmore had the pride of being escorted by three gentlemen, and the pleasure of talking to them all the way.

The delay occasioned by these arrangements gave the Teviot carriage some little advance, and the cheers with which it was received reached Lady Portmore's ears when she was in the midst of one of her confidential harangues.

"What a noise!" she said. "All on G.'s account, of course; he is so extremely popular. I often tell him his head will be turned. How they are cheering! it must be for him. What is it all about?"