



A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Been a little overdoing it," he said, in answer to Maida's anxious enquiry. "Says I ought to take a rest, mustn't excite myself— Oh, the usual thing. They all say the same. There's nothing the matter with me."

"But why not rest, father?" she asked, taking his great hand in hers, and fondling it. "Why should you work so hard? You are rich enough already. Why do you want more money?"

Carrington laughed evasively.

"Nobody's rich enough, my dear," he said. "Everybody wants more. Besides, I want my gel to have plenty of money; she'll want it in her position."

"Money!" said Maida, stifling a sigh. "Father, I almost hate the word"—Mr. Carrington looked as shocked as if she had said something blasphemous—"I shall quite hate it if you make yourself ill trying to get more. Besides, Byrne has told me of your generosity to us, and there is no need to give us any more. Promise me, father—"

He drew his hand away impatiently. "Don't you worry yourself about what you don't understand, my dear," he said. "I tell you I am quite well. Everything's prospering, everything's all right. The Roaring Jane shares stand higher than ever they did"—he broke off, and an expression came into his eyes—a half-vacant, half-uneasy expression—which Maida had seen once or twice before and which had always caused her a vague anxiety—"I must be off to the city. Got a meeting of the Bilchester Electric Traction Company. I'll knock off some of the work, if that'll please you. Getting on all right with your shopping? Want any more money? Don't spare it. You can have as much as ever you want. Beautiful house, this." They were in the drawing-room of Glassbury House. "Who'd have thought a year ago that we should have been staying here, guess of the Right Honourable the Earl of Glassbury; who's have thought that my gel was going to marry an earl himself; and you talk about hating money. It's right down wicked. Why, it's money that has done it all."

He went off and left Maida standing, feeling as if a chill had suddenly swept over her. The money had done it all. Yes; but for her money, Heroncourt— She thrust the thought from her with a little spasm of pain. They were in town a little over a fortnight, and kind as Lady Glassbury had been, and much as she had enjoyed the shopping, Maida was glad to get back to the Towers. The whole place seemed shimmering with excitement over the coming wedding, and Heroncourt and the Carringtons found themselves in a vortex of dinner-parties and festivities, all in honour of the bride and bridegroom elect. Tremendous preparations were in progress; the whole village was to be

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en fete on the wedding-day; there were to be triumphal arches. Heroncourt's tenants, and Mr. Carrington's employees—the entire village, in fact were to be feasted. There was to be a reception after the wedding and on the same night a ball at the Towers to which half the county was invited. The Towers itself was in a state of confusion with preparations for the great event; an extra staff of servants had been engaged; dress-makers and milliners were at work all day and apparently all night. And the confusion at the Court was still greater, for the place was in the hands of the decorators, who were hard at work restoring it to its ancient splendour.

Heroncourt, who, of course, had come down with his beloved, was driven from his own rooms and forced to take refuge in some small ones in a turret.

"Shouldn't be surprised if they drove me into the tool-house," he said, laughingly, to Maida. "The foreman looks at me every time I pass him as if I were an intruder and a nuisance; and I rather fancy the workmen try to splash me with whitewash when I pass."

"Why do you not go up to your own rooms in London, Byrne?" she asked.

He laughed and looked into her eyes.

"I'm quite willing to go into the tool-house so that I may be near you, dearest," he said. "Besides, I like it—I mean all the confusion and fuss—because it helps me to realise that in a few days I shall have you for my very own; that we are making the shrine in some way, worthy of the treasure who is coming to live in it."

Carrie was not the least busy of the party. She seemed to be everywhere at once and to be superintending the whole thing, the dress-makers and the servants at the Towers, even the decorators at the Court.

"I'm glad I've not got another sister to be married," she declared. "It would be the death of me. I'm sure everything would go wrong if I didn't look after it. That last man father engaged was found drunk in the pantry, and they were going to decorate your boudoir in green; and you know your colour is pink! How you can remain as calm and serene as you do simply puzzles me. I suppose you don't care about anything so long as you have Heroncourt."

"That's just it," said Maida, with a guilty blush. "I do not care about anything else. I should be as happy if he and I were going to live in one of the cottages in the village. Ah, I can't explain."

"There's no need, my child," retorted Carrie. "It's all summed up in one phrase: you are hopelessly and ridiculously in love. Oh, what a warning it is to me!"

The time passed quickly to Maida, though its wings seemed to be of lead to Heroncourt. She could scarcely realise, as she walked over to the Court, that for only two days longer would she be Maida Carrington, that in two days she would be Byrne's wife, the Countess of Heroncourt.

The workmen had made rapid progress at the Court, and the alterations were nearly completed, completed sufficiently to permit of Lord and Lady Glassbury coming down. Maida was going over to see what had been done, and to ask the Glassburys to dinner at the Towers that night.

She was so happy that she could scarcely refrain from singing as she went; and all nature seemed to sympathize with her mood; for the sun was shining brightly and lighting up the autumnal tints of the Heroncourt trees and encouraging the birds to sing as if it were summer.

Heroncourt met her half-way, and



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they walked slowly to the huge house, talking as lovers will do. They were going to the Italian lakes for their honeymoon, and he told her that Baxter had already booked their seats, engaged their rooms, and made their course easy for them.

"When I think of the happiness that lies before me I feel as if I were in a dream," he said. "It is only when I am near you, when I can touch you, that I realise it. I hope you'll like what they have done at the Court, dearest. Ethelreda is looking forward to showing it all to you."

"I am sure to like it, Byrne," she said. "How kind it is of Lady Glassbury to take so much trouble."

"Ah, well, she is an old friend," he said, easily—a man accepts a woman's friendship as a matter of course. "Besides, she is very fond of you and is quite happy at the thought of pleasing you."

"I am very grateful to her," said Maida.

Lady Glassbury met them in the hall, where some workmen were still engaged.

"My dear Maida, I do hope you haven't anything on that will spoil!" she exclaimed, as she kissed Maida. "Wherever you go you get splashed, or trip over a pot of paint or a pail of paste."

Maida looked round her with surprise.

"It is very beautiful," she said.

"Come into the drawing-room," cried Lady Glassbury, taking her hand. "What do you think of it; are you pleased?"

"It is lovely," said Maida. "How hard they must have worked."

"We will go upstairs presently," said Lady Glassbury. "Carrie is there superintending the furnishing of your room. I don't know what you would have done without her. She is the cleverest girl I know."

"Carrie is a brick," said Heroncourt, emphatically.

Carrie at that moment appeared. She was enveloped in a huge pinafore and had a roll of damask in her hand.

"Oh, come upstairs, Maida!" she cried. "That is, if Byrne could part with you for five minutes."

Maida went upstairs and inspected her rooms.

"They are beautiful—perfect!" was all that she could say as Carrie led her from one to the other.

Heroncourt and Ethel were left alone. She looked round the room then sank into a seat as if she were tired.

"You are taking a lot of trouble, Ethel," Heroncourt said. "It's very good of you, and Maida and I are very grateful. But you must not overture yourself."

"I am not," she said. "Do you think it is not a pleasure for me to do what I can for you. Is there anything I would not do for you, Byrne?"

She looked at him with a smile, but there was the shadow of a tear in her eyes. He went to her and laid his hand on her shoulder. It was an unwise thing to do; but men are always doing unwise things.

"You are not unhappy, Ethel?" he asked.

"Not unhappy, Byrne," she replied. "Your happiness is mine. I would give my life to win it for you; but sometimes—much as I love Maida—I can't help thinking what might have been if— Oh, it's wicked of me to talk like this—but I would give the world to be in her place!"

At this moment Maida came into

the room with a piece of tapestry upon which Carrie had asked her to consult Heroncourt. She saw him standing with his hand upon Lady Glassbury's shoulder, saw the unshed tears in her eyes. Maida stopped in the doorway, irresolute, undecided whether to advance or to retire. She could not avoid hearing the next words.

"Don't mind me, Byrne. Of course I am happy. But there is always the feeling— One cannot always forget the past, try as one will. I look back and think, if I had been as rich as Maida— Ah, well, how different things would have been. Oh, forgive me, forgive me! I ought not to have said it—"

He bent over her, and taking her hand, raised it reverently and gratefully to his lips.

"Best and truest of friends," he murmured. Then, as if he felt the peril of the situation, he walked away and left the room by the conservatory.

Maida came forward. Her heart was beating thickly, her face was pale as death.

"I came to ask Heroncourt—" she said in a toneless voice.

Lady Glassbury sprang to her feet, drew her hand across her eyes, and looked at the white-faced girl as if terror-stricken.

"You heard—you were there?" she said, breathlessly.

"Yes; I saw and heard, Lady Glassbury."

Lady Glassbury caught at her hand.

"And you misunderstood—you misunderstood!" she cried. "Maida, let me tell you all— For God's sake, don't look at me like that! Your eyes seem to pierce me. It is not as you think—fear. Oh, I want to tell you all. Sit down!"

She sank into a chair, but Maida stood, still looking straight before her, her hands gripping the piece of tapestry tightly. Lady Glassbury covered her face with her hands for a moment, then she looked up. Her face was nearly as pale as Maida's, and her lips were writhing as if with pain.

"Maida, I cannot have you think—wrongly, of me. I have known Byrne all my life. We were always—great friends. At one time—oh, it's hard to speak of it!—at one time I thought—hoped— But it was not to be. It was impossible! We were both poor. I crushed out all thoughts of him. And he—he knew that he could never be more to me than a friend. I married Glassbury; but we were friends still—potholder more. I swear to you, Maida—then he met you; and he fell in love with you—how could he help it? Is there any man who would not fall in love with you?—And you were rich— And I was glad—I wanted him to be happy. I swear to you, Maida, that I was glad. I am glad. It was only for a moment that the past came back to me— Oh, Maida, what shall I say? Don't you believe me? I am a good wife—a good woman."

She caught Maida's hands and pressed them fiercely.

(To be Continued.)

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War News.

Messages Received Previous to 9 A.M.

RUSSIAN SUCCESSES.
 PETROGRAD, July 9.—Several villages and more than 7,000 men have been captured by the Russians west of Stanislaus in Galicia, the war office announced. Thirty-eight guns, including twelve of large size, and many machine guns were captured by the Russians.

RUSSIANS CONTINUE ATTACK.
 BERLIN, July 9.—Russian troops continue their attacks in the region of Stanislaus. A supplementary official statement adds that a German counter thrust has stopped the Russian advance.

AUSTRIANS ADMIT LOST TERRITORIES.
 VIENNA, July 9.—Northwest of Stanislaus in Galicia the first defence positions of the Austrians have been occupied by the Russians after two days' hard fighting, says an official from the Austro-Hungarian general headquarters today.

PRISONERS TAKEN.
 LONDON, July 9.—In a successful raid by the 1st night southeast of Hargicourt, we captured 36 prisoners, including one officer, says to-day's official announcement. A hostile raiding party, dispersed early this morning, was east of Loos.

GERMAN ATTACK.
 PARIS, July 9.—Another attack in strong force was made by the Germans last night on the Aisne front in the region of Chemin des Dames, between Doyts and Chevreigny Ridge. The war office announces that in a brilliant counter-offensive the French recaptured the major part of the trenches occupied by the Germans yesterday between Panteon and Froilmont Farm.

VISITS SCENE OF RAID.
 LONDON, July 9.—Indifferent to a steady downpour of rain, which lasted the whole day, many thousands visited yesterday the area where bombs fell Saturday morning to see very extensive damage to property. But in this they were disappointed. An inspection of the damaged buildings showed that the zone affected by each bomb was more narrowly circumscribed in nearly every case. The damage consisted mainly of broken glass and window frames. The actual material damage effected was comparatively insignificant and tends to prove that the bombs carried by the airplanes were far less destructive than those dropped previously in Zeppelin raids. Saturday's aerial attack more than proved the wisdom of seeking safety in the fleet of raiders was probably seen by the general public before the bombardment commenced. Nearly everyone took measures of self-protection, while in the previous raid when the enemy airmen were seen as to be practically invisible the people remained in the streets. Because there were fewer casualties and less suffering in this raid to a large extent suffered slight wounds from scattered glass. Although the loss of life is considerably less than in previous raids, Saturday's attacks appeared more to popular imagination than to the peculiar circumstances of the temerity of the raiders in flying over Little else is talked of but the immunity whereby the raiders were enabled so deliberately to set about their task and it is certain the Government will have to meet very strong criticism both in press and Parliament. The feeling in Parliamentary circles is rapidly growing in favour of vigorous reprisals. Ministers will be pressed in the Commons for a decision.

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