

THE WATERS OF CONTRADICTION

BY ANNA C. MINOQUE
Author of "Cardome," "Borrowed From the Night"

CHAPTER VI

It did not seem so very long to Miss Cora until the children who had battled on the playground had grown beyond it, and now occupied the place once sacred to Annabelle, long ago married, and her early lovers. And yet there had been changes enough in her own life and the lives around her to mark the progress of time.

A notable one had come into the school, inaugurated by the teacher herself. The prosperity that was attending her brother's business, soon made her realize that her savings, however well invested, would prove an unnoticeable part in the fortune his children would inherit, while in her work they could be used with great benefit for her pupils. The condition of these pupils, many of them sons and daughters of generations of educated parents, others possessing unusual talent, appealed to her great heart. She knew the former, because of her parents' poverty, could not but perpetuate the scholarship of their race, while the latter, for the same reason, would be prevented from elevating themselves by means of their natural gifts; hence, she heroically set about to remedy the evil in as far as was in her power.

She spent her long vacations in college, studying branches taught in the higher schools and academies, and her leisure during the remainder of the year in perfecting herself in them. It would be, of course, impossible for one person, however capable, to impart this knowledge to the various classes, in one short day; and so she decided to bring about a division of the school. When the innovation was suggested to the trustees, they gasped for breath. Where, they exclaimed, was the second room to come from, when they had difficulty enough in getting money from the people of the district to keep the present one in repairs?

"I have considered all that," said Miss Cora. "There is the little cabin in Mr. Dalton's sugar-tree grove, across the road from the school. It is never used now, and I am certain he would be only too glad to help along the work by letting us have it. The children are getting up an entertainment, admission to which will supply us with a sufficient amount of money to pay for windows, a small blackboard and chalk. Mr. Miller would not, I know, charge for the making of a recitation bench and two more desks, with the ones we could spare from the school, would be sufficient, if the material were supplied him: I shall provide that."

The last remark modified them considerably, and more than one mentally vowed it should not all be provided for by the plucky little woman, if the project were accepted by their associates, which was not likely, for how, they asked her, could they provide a teacher for the primary classes, when it was with difficulty they secured funds to pay her, and that far below her value.

"I will provide the teachers," said Miss Cora, "from among the larger boys and girls. Besides the opportunity it will afford them, if I had more time for their instruction in the higher branches, the teaching of the smaller classes will be a valuable experience for them. There is nothing that helps to develop the mind and mould character more than teaching. Besides they will in a measure repay for the higher education they are receiving, in assisting the teacher with her duties. I will spend a portion of each day with the lower school. Now, gentlemen, I have thought out my plan carefully, and, if it is accepted, the children of this district will secure the benefits of a higher education, which, otherwise, few if any of them will have."

"But," objected Mr. Dalton, "have you considered, Miss Cora, the additional work this will entail upon yourself? You will have then two schools practically to teach, with only the time and salary for one?"

"I have considered it all," said Miss Cora. "For the past three years I have been preparing myself for it. I can now give instructions in Latin and French, in bookkeeping and higher mathematics. I have studied drawing and next vacation intend to take up painting, in order to be able to give instructions in colors. I even took lessons in embroidery," she concluded with a nervous little laugh, "for while all these girls should possess this ladylike accomplishment, not all, Mr. Dalton, have a mother like Sylvia to instruct them in the gentle art of the needle."

"Such devotion to the welfare of the school, gentlemen," said Mr. Dalton, "commands our instant and hearty co-operation. We cannot be less interested in it than Miss Cora."

And so Miss Cora gained her point, and, when the next session opened, the second room was ready for occupancy. The plan proved feasible and new glory was added to the fame of Stanton school. It now took rank above the town school, and the trustees voted an increase in Miss Cora's salary to be paid by themselves and a few of the more prosperous men of the district, when several applications were received from children living in the village. This Miss Cora accepted on condition that the school term should be extended another month. Then was Miss Cora

happy, for she felt something could be accomplished.

In the course of time, Arthur and Lucy became her chief dependance in the primary department, while maintaining their high rank as scholars. With Lucy her success was the result of ambition, but with Arthur it was born of the knowledge that manhood was approaching and he must fit himself for it because of the necessity for him to win back the fortunes of his house. There had been other divisions of his once princely estate, and all that now remained were two hundred acres, and the old hall, fast going to ruin. A farmer he felt he could not be, with so small an acreage, when his forefathers, possessing thousands had only succeeded in holding their own among the planters. All that remained for him was the power that might be stored in his brain, and this he spared no effort to develop. The usual means of making it was the subject of many a grave conversation between him and his grandmother, for his mother had married the gallant Captain and gone to her new home. Finally, unable to decide for him, she sought counsel with Miss Cora, and that young woman's embarrassment was apparent. Had it been concerning Jasper Long she had been questioned, she unhesitatingly would have advised that he should study art, for since the day the first drawing lesson had been given, he went to his work as a bird to the open sky.

It was not likely that he would be permitted to follow the call of his soul, for his father expected that he would uphold the traditions of the family, raise large crops, fat beeves and good horses; for, while these were not proving as profitable as formerly, the condition, he knew, would eventually change. The country would recover from the effects of war, grow more powerful than it had ever been, and in that time it was upon the farmer it must depend, who would in consequence reap a rich harvest once more. Thus he reasoned, and, if he did not withdraw Jasper from the school and early instruct him in his calling, it was because the Longs had always been scholarly inclined, and, as he was in the prime of life, there was time enough for the boy. Hence Jasper had continued to be numbered among Miss Cora's pupils, even after the down of manhood showed upon his face, held there by love of the work she taught him to do with pencil and brush, and because it sheltered Milly.

But of Arthur, Miss Cora knew not what to say. Had he been other than the proud old woman's only hope and joy, she would have advised that he content himself with the livelihood to be found in his depleted inheritance, or put to use the bookkeeping in which he had become proficient. She could not, however, give this crowning pain to the heart that had suffered so much before its lowered banners; but for long days afterward her sensitive conscience reproached her, because she weakly suggested the law.

At the words the old face brightened. "It was what I recommended, Miss Cora," she said, "but Arthur was diffident. He feels he has not the subtlety of mind it calls for, nor the delivery. None of the Stantons were lawyers, he said. But that, I told him, is no reason why he should not succeed. My father was a lawyer of marked ability, and why should not Arthur inherit that talent?"

Her certitude concerning Arthur's ability in this department of work disconcerted Miss Cora. She knew the intuitions of the boy were correct, and, when he began applying himself to the study of Latin, and she found him reading Blackstone instead of poetry of which he was fond, her eyes grew dim with tears of pity.

"It is not his work," she thought, sadly. "He will succeed in it, but he will not be happy. All his life, instead of the dull office and the court-room, he will see the green fields and open skies and the things that are not for him."

While Lucy kept pace with her classmates in the new studies into which they were gradually introduced, it was in the little school across the road she was most truly in her sphere, and Miss Cora early perceived that the classes taught by Lucy excelled those of the other volunteers, while complaint against her method of discipline was never heard. It might have been her own self living her youth over again, and often, in the solemn moments that occasionally came to her, as she meditated on the future of the school should she die or be obliged to retire, devoutly she wished she could go with the knowledge that her work had fallen into the capable hands of Lucy Frazier.

Even as she voiced the wish she smiled at the improbability of its fulfillment. Lucy Frazier to settle down into the monotonous life of a teacher, who always sought whatever excitement and change the simple life afforded? Lucy to content herself with a work of pure unselfishness, who demanded that every one should contribute to her pleasure? Lucy willingly to turn to her life of spinsterhood, who already was learning the power of her beauty and as quickly learning how best to employ it? Lucy to become the ill-paid, hard-working teacher of Stanton school, whose father was being numbered among the men who were coming in in the country, and whose son would stand with her own nephews among its leaders? Miss Cora turned from her thought, with

a sigh. Elsewhere than in Alexander Frazier's daughter must she look for her successor.

And yet, sitting on the green hill with her class-mates around her and below on the playground her sometimes pupils noisily engaged in the games she had lately abandoned, Lucy fancied it would indeed be pleasant thus to spend her days. Once she voluted her tongue for the words, as she saw the curl of Sylvia Dalton's lip.

"What a glorious ambition!" she exclaimed. "To be an old maid like Miss Cora?"

"I don't think it is nice in you to call Miss Cora names, Sylvia," complained Milly, whose dark beauty had grown strangely deep and pathetic with the approach of womanhood.

"Oh, don't you?" exclaimed Sylvia, treating her to a look more scornful than she had given Lucy. "I regret exceedingly that I must forfeit your good opinion. I scarcely know how I shall survive. Nevertheless, I must still persist in calling Miss Cora an old maid. I am sure she is old; I am equally sure she is unmarried; if these two conditions do not constitute an old maid, I wish you would tell me what does?"

The high-flown language silenced Milly, as she knew it would; but Lucy stepped into the breach.

"I can tell you what constitute good manners, Sylvia, if you will but know?" she said, as her voice and face were cold as steel.

"Thank you, but I was taught good manners before you learned the meaning of the words," she said loftily, although the pink deepened on her cheek, for there was a laugh on Jasper's lips.

"It is strange you do not practice your teachings," observed Lucy.

"I do among my equals," she answered, while her black eyes travelled slowly and meaningly from Lucy to Milly.

"Come, Milly, let us leave Sylvia with her equals!" exclaimed Lucy, turning suddenly upon the quiet girl seated on the grass, her faded muslin dress spread out so as to cover her feet, illy shod in a pair of shoes that had been Arthur's mother's. Reluctantly she rose, for she was averse to leave Arthur, especially when his companion would be this scornful girl.

"Good-bye, boys! Maybe you will enjoy yourselves," cried Lucy, resting her laughing eyes upon Arthur and Jasper.

"We expect to, since we are going along," said Arthur, thrusting his hand under Jasper's arm, and they marched away, leaving Sylvia, wild with rage, upon the hillside.

"No one shall speak disrespectfully of Miss Cora and hold my good opinion," said Arthur, not careful of the pitch of his voice. "It was the bravest thing in the world the way you stood up for her, Milly! Wasn't it Jasper?"

"That's what it was," said Jasper. "But you can always count on Milly standing up for any one she loves."

Milly said nothing, but her beautiful eyes were glowing under the downcast lids, for sweeter than all the things of earth was praise from Arthur. A lump rose in Lucy's throat. They had no word for her, who had finished, with victory, the battle of defense Milly had begun and abandoned; for she could not see that they intuitively recognized that Milly's act had been prompted by love of the teacher, while Lucy's had for its motive the desire to defeat a personal foe. Their walk led them to the spring hidden by the hill. Reaching it, they once more sought seats on the grass. After they had again discussed Sylvia's rudeness, Lucy, out of a fit of silence, said:

"And I meant what I said. I wish things might go on forever as they are now, but they won't, for my anxiety, for my father intends to send me away to a convent school in September. There now! they told me not to say anything about it, but I couldn't help it. I know I shall hate it! Oh-h-h!" and Lucy's flower-like face dropped into her hands, and tears of sorrow for the approaching severance of these ties, and deeper sorrow that Arthur should prefer Milly to her, bedewed her fingers and crept down to the slender wrists.

The boys stared at each other in surprise, for it was the first time in their experience that such a good fortune had befallen a pupil of Stanton school. Milly, however, thought only of Lucy's grief, and she flung her little arms around her rival's neck and whispered words of love and sympathy. Then, the others recovered from their astonishment, and Jasper, in a quiet way, offered his congratulations.

"You say that because you are glad to have me leave Stanton school," cried Lucy. "I don't know why you should. I never did anything to you. If it were Arthur, I could understand it—but you?"

"Why, Lucy?" exclaimed Arthur. "Don't you appreciate what your father is doing for you? Jasper does, and so he is pleased at the good fortune that is yours."

"Good fortune?" repeated Lucy, the pretty face still wet. "Where is the good fortune in being sent a hundred miles from home, your mother and father, your little sister and brother, and every one and everything you love. I know I shall be the most miserable girl on earth. I shall hate it. I wish I could die before September!"

"O Lucy! Lucy! please hush!" cried Milly, turning her dearlike eyes around, as if she expected to see the grim Executioner advancing to give the desired freedom.

"I shall die there of homesickness," insisted Lucy, enjoying amidst all her grief the excitement she was causing. "It would be better to die now and save them the expense of taking me there and back."

"You won't die, Lucy," said Arthur, confidently. "You will get used to it after a while. My grandmother went to a boarding-school, and it was taught by nuns, and she liked it. They were kind and good to the pupils, she said, and instructed them in many accomplishments."

"Accomplishments!" exclaimed Lucy. "I don't want to be taught accomplishments. I'd rather stay here with Miss Cora and learn Latin and mathematics."

"Oh; they teach those things, too," said Arthur; "but for ladies accomplishments are best."

"I think, Arthur," she said slowly, and her words dropped scorchingly on the boy's heart, "your place is back on the hill with Sylvia. Milly and I are not of the class that turns out ladies according to your type."

The color dwindled from Arthur's face. He rose slowly and said, his voice stumbling over the words: "I believe you are right, Miss Frazier!"

For a moment his eyes rested on her, unconsciously stamping on his memory her face as it looked in that moment, which seemed to him to be one of solemn farewell; then his gaze passed to Milly, drooping beneath the erect, defiant figure of her companion. The pathos of the faded dress, the shooshoelarge and worn, the attitude and mournful beauty, almost flung him on his knees by her side;

the truth of Lucy's bitter words drove him onward. As she heard him going, Milly, scarcely understanding what had been said, and conscious only that Arthur and Lucy had had another quarrel, was rising to follow after, when Lucy drew her down, with a rude, angry hand.

"Stay here, you little fool!" she cried passionately. "He doesn't want you! Didn't you hear him say so?"

"Arthur never said that!" she cried, tearfully.

"Ask Jasper, then!" commanded Lucy.

She turned her quivering dark face to the boy, a flush on his brow.

"Did he, Jasper?" she asked, hoarsely.

"Yes, Milly, he said it," said Jasper, steadily. "And he doesn't realize himself how much of it he means. And although he is Arthur Stanton, he is a cad!"

Lucy had never heard the quiet boy so express himself, and Milly drew back, feeling more desolate than ever. Lucy was going away. Arthur did not want her, and Jasper was cross. Truly the storm was fast gathering over her defenseless head, and she knew not whether to fly for shelter.

"Lucy," said Jasper, out of a thoughtful silence, "please don't get offended, but why is it you always succeed in rousing the very worst there is in Arthur? He might never have come to the conviction that is now taking him to Sylvia, if you had not dragged it out of his heart, and held it up for him to look upon."

"I suppose it is because I cannot help it," she said slowly. "And yet I am glad I did, now that it is done. It is a cad, I want to know it, and I want him to know it, too, and to know that I know it."

"But he won't look at it in that light. It is only right to him," said Jasper.

"Well, let him break his heart in doing what he thinks is right," she said. "It is—us he likes, not her."

"But there is Milly," he said softly, his eyes leaving her face. Following them, Lucy saw that Milly had left the spring, and was walking slowly across the playground to the little bench on the other side of the road, in which she was to teach that afternoon. The narrow skirt of the faded dress just reached her shoetops. The form, too thin for her youth, was bowed from the waist, and the link arms hung listlessly by her sides. The rich brown hair fell down her back in a heavy braid, for she had no pins to wear it in a more becoming fashion and suited to her age. The step was awkward because of the large shoes, and heavy because of the heart beneath the tight fitting bodice. The scorching tears crept up to Lucy's eyes as they took in the details of the figure, while memory supplied the growing sadness of the brown face. Why had she done this thing? Why had she wrung from Arthur the admission of the difference between them, when Milly's poor flower of happiness must be crushed thereby? Even if she, Lucy, also suffered from it, she had other comforts, pretty dresses, a happy home, all but the thing she most wanted; while Milly had nothing, and now she had snatched from her the belief that she possessed this thing so precious to both. Why had she done this? Was it not, whispered a voice within, caused as much by jealousy of Milly as a desire to wound Arthur?

She half-rose to spring after the girl and cry out her sorrow, when Jasper's hand drew her gently back to her place.

"Let her alone!" he said. "She'll get over it sooner by herself. You don't understand her well enough, Lucy, to make amends."

After a moment he said: "I am sorry, Lucy, you don't like to go to school—the convent school, I mean. You will have such chances there. I don't mean 'accomplishments'!" he added with a laugh, "but other things."

"What are they?" she asked, modified, and reflecting how much nicer than Arthur was Jasper long.

"Drawing and painting, for one thing," he said. "I shouldn't be surprised if at that school there would be an artist," he uttered the word with reverence, "to teach the pupils. And that is ever so much better than to work under one who has just studied it as a branch of knowledge—Miss Cora said so."

"But I don't care for drawing and painting," she complained. "I could not draw a straight line to save my life. And I'd much rather help Miss Cora teach the little children."

"I wonder why it is," said Jasper, "that the things people don't want are the things they have got to accept, while the things they do want go to other people who cannot appreciate them at half their value. Now if my father were to offer to send me where I could learn to be an artist—O Lucy!"

"And wouldn't he, if you were to ask him?" said Lucy, awed by the tragedy of Jasper's face. "He is as well off as my father, isn't he?"

"That makes no difference," he answered. "He'll never do it any how. He intends that I shall be a planter—a farmer I mean. He'd think I had gone crazy, if I were to ask to study drawing and painting."

"But when you are a man," began Lucy.

"When I am a man I shall be less able to follow my inclinations than now," he interrupted.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because I shall have duties then," he explained. "And duties, Lucy, are harder obstacles to get away from than your father's opposition to your plans for yourself when you are young."

"I shouldn't recognize any duty that stood between me and the thing I wished to do," cried Lucy.

"But I am not, like you, Lucy," he said, and she knew there was regret in his voice, but instantly he added: "And there is as much happiness in doing your duty as in following your wishes, only it is different."

"And that difference makes a difference in the happiness," said Lucy suddenly, and before he had time to think of a reply, the school bell rang.

TO BE CONTINUED

"PITCHY-PATCHY"

Lucille Kling in the Ave Maria

Well, of course—Mrs. McNeil bit her thread off thoughtfully and jabbed it at her needle—of course it does depend on your own feelings a good deal—what Father Kelly'd call your dispositions. A retreat can't do you much good if you harden your heart against grace. But, to my way of thinking, if you once begin the retreat you've opened the door, and our Lord has mighty coaxing ways about Him: let Him alone to find a way in. Now, there was the girl in the room with me at the retreat last summer—

She must have been thirty five, but she did not look it—not within ten years,—except she was sort of tired-looking around her eyes. Pretty she was, and what Helen calls well-groomed. I knew she'd come from town the minute I set my eyes on her: for she had one of them perky little hats with scarcely any trimming, and a leather satchel she called "a bag" instead of a suitcase. I'd make up my mind I was going to keep silence, if I died trying, so I just smiled friendly-like to answer her, and went on unpacking. But you better believe I watched her out o' the corner of my eye. My Helen'll be nineteen this spring, but she'll be a deal older than she is 'fore her mother loses interest in good clothes. I declare I've no patience with folks that are forever preaching how the Lord loves a shabby bonnet! What'd He dress the birds and flowers up for, then?

Well, this girl did have good clothes, fine and dainty and ladylike, not a bed-fussy; and by the time we'd went down to breakfast the second morning I could a-told you every stitch she had made, from her little bed-slippers to the one-piece dress of tan linen she'd put on for the exercises. My dear, but she was the prettiest thing! The frilled white lace cap she wore, 'count of being in and out the chapel so much, made her look like a young girl. We hadn't talked, but I knew her name was Irene Blair from the tag on her satchel; and I suspected she was a stenographer or business woman of some sort. You can usually tell 'em, they're so capable acting.

But she wan't happy. Her mouth look just like Frankie's does when he's getting ready to say "I won't!" And it kept getting more so all the time. Father Kelly'd said the Mass that morning, and I saw him stop her as we came out from breakfast. He appeared to be arguing with her: for at first she shook her head, stubborn; and then seem to give in, reluctant-like. He came to talk to me afterwards.

"You look after Irene Blair a little, Miss McNeil," he says. "She tells me you and she are in the same room, and she's homesick. She never made a retreat in a convent before, and she feels so out o' place she'd made up her mind to leave today."

"I know she won't be happy," I say, "but Father, what can I do?"

He laughed at that.

"How should I know?" says he.

"You womenfolks have your own way o' doing things. Don't break the silence too much; and say a few prayers for her in the chapel. I want she should finish this retreat; her father was one o' my school chums."

I was all ruffled up in my mind when I went into the chapel for the first sermon. But I set by her and smiled; and afterwards I said a decade o' the Beads for her. Then I

went down to the nursery to see how the baby was, and forgot all about her for a while.

They were three or four of 'em there and one of the Sister's and two Sodality girls that are kindergarteners. They was playing some game in a circle, but Dickie just nacherly jumped up and run to me. I picked him up and cuddled him; and he snuggled his head on my neck, like a little tot will. When I looked up Irene Blair was standing in the doorway with the stungriest look on her face I ever saw. "Well," says I to myself, "she like children, that's one thing."

The other mothers went back to their homes at nights, and took the young ones; but my Dickie'd been visiting before; and he's good as a kitten, anyway. So he had a trundle bed right beside mine; and I put him to bed just before supper, though I generally had to eat at second table 'count of it; gave me a chance to say the Beads again, though, while I was getting him quiet.

He'd just got off to sleep, with one end o' my Rosary in his fat little fist, when Irene come in.

"Oh, ain't you been down yet?" she says. "I can't talk like she did. City folks certainly do have a way with 'em."

"No," says I. "Did you want me? S'pose we go down together?"

"To supper, yes, but not to chapel. If I hear another lecture today, I'll scream," and she quirked her mouth as stubborn as any kid you ever saw.

Well I didn't try to coax her, though she did go in with me for Benediction; but you can bank on it I didn't waste any time getting upstairs when night prayers was over. She was fiddling with something in her bag.

"Do you mind if I leave the light burning a little longer?" says I. "Helen" (that's my oldest girl) "is going to stop by tomorrow for these socks, and they ain't darned yet."

"I wish you'd let me help you," she answers coaxing-like. "And do you mind if I talk?"

So I got out my darning, and straightened the covers over Dickie, and we settled down as cozy as you please; and the first I knew she up and told me the whole thing.

"I'm 'Pitchy-Patchy' all right," says I, laughing a little. "But three boys make a heap a-darnin'. And that ain't saying Helen can't darn, for she can; but she's young yet, and she ain't learned to slack. She'd take a whole morning darnin' one pair o' her father's socks; and then where'd Leo and his brothers be? There's a heap in knowing when to slack onthings."

"Pitchy Patchy?" says she, darnin' away.

"Yes, 'That was one o' my grandmother's stories,—but the old man that had had three wives, and one of 'em patched ad mended, and one ties the holes up any old way, and did nothing at all. Well, he used to go and pray at their graves on dark nights, and he'd say real fervent: 'Lord rest Pitchy Patchy! Lord rest Knitty-Knotty!' An' then, just as ugly as ever he ever be could: 'Old Scratch take 'em all!'"

She laughed at that.

"Well," she says, "I must have been Pitchy-Patchy most o' my life then. Father died when I was real little, and mother and me brought up my two sisters. They're married and gone now, and she's dead. But seems to me there never was enough. We patched and patched and patched, and darned and darned and darned. Oh, how I hated it! Never any good thing nor any pretty clothes like a young girl has a right to have. When I got my first job and got started, I gave the girls a little better than I had though, and made mother's last days easy. Now they're gone, and a year ago I met the Man. He's the most wonderful man in the world, 'sides McNeil; the biggest and the sanest and the kindest-hearted. He's made his own success; but he's so big he wants the other fellow to succeed, too. There's millionaires in this country proud to have him for a friend. And he's been the making o' me. I was just an ordinary stenographer when I went into his office. You wouldn't believe the things he's taught me. And now"—her face got all pink and tender and sparkly,— "now he loves me."

"My dear," I says, "I can see you love him, too."

"Oh, I do! Oh, Miss McNeil, don't you believe every woman has a right to her happiness, to love and a home and—children?"

She stopped, and the tiredness came in her eyes again, and the "I won't!" look to her mouth.

"He's divorced," she says. "He's not a Catholic and he's divorced."

"My dear," I begun.

"Oh," says she, all fierce in a minute, "it wasn't his fault! His wife was a cat. He's the finest, truest man, and she almost broke his heart. Then she wanted her freedom and he gave it to her, and took the world's blame himself. He's never had a home or happiness or children."

Well, I said nothing to that. I know such things do happen; the man ain't always to blame when a family goes to pieces that way. So I kept on darnin', still saying nothing. After a minute or two she begins again:

"I dunno what I'm here for, 'cause I've made up my mind to marry him. I shouldn't have come at all if I hadn't met Father Kelly on the street last week. He made me promise I'd make this retreat. But it'll be the last. The Man's coming for me Friday morning in his car, and we're going to drive out to G—and be married by the Justice of Peace. I don't care!" She jabbed her needle

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