

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND

BY CHRISTINE FABER

Thurston was himself the bearer of the letter to Miss Burchill, summing her for that purpose to the parlour. Perhaps he wished to observe her manner when she took it, for having glanced at the superscription, and having seen that it was written in a fine manly hand, he was conscious of a slight pang. Miss Burchill's affections were already engaged. But her surprise was so great and so genuine as she received it that she felt quite rattled. He had told her from whose hand he had taken it, and in her astonishment at being the recipient of a letter—she had no correspondents—she forgot to wonder why Mrs. Phillips had not herself the bearer of it. Having made a few kind inquiries, Gerald left her in his perusal. She took it to her room.

On my God! she said when she had read it, and her tears were falling fast, "how inscrutable are Thy ways!" It was, indeed, a tender dispensation of Thine that made me the teacher and companion of his child. Oh mother, I shall now have an opportunity of fulfilling your bequest. He must be in sore need. My poor, poor uncle! "The roses and daisies had been planted in a garden by the well where she had been taking from a trunk her little savings from the salary she had been paid by Robinson, and avoiding Cora, who was dressing for the evening dinner, she hurried out and took her way to the Hogan's home.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Hogan had any curiosity to know more about the stranger who had solicited from them an abiding place than what he had told them, and it sufficed that he was a friend of Miss Burchill's. Owing to their warm regard for her name was a passport to any kindness they could render; so Wiley, as he called himself, was treated to the best the poor people could afford, and neither plied with questions nor asked to talk upon any subject further than that upon which he might choose to speak himself. As soon as Miss Burchill appeared, Mrs. Hogan, with instinctive delicacy before suffering her to meet the stranger, ushered her into an adjoining room, and bade Mr. Wiley follow. So the two were quite alone when they met. Both stood irresolute for a moment, each actuated by emotions which at once impelled them to and restrained them from reaching out.

At length he extended his hands and said with a tremor in his voice that spoke but of his keenest sympathy: "Are you glad or sorry to see me, Mildred?" "No, no," she replied, "I am glad to see you, but I shall not blight the very springtime of her life by letting her know that her father is an escaped state-prison convict. If she must know it when she becomes older be it so, for by that time I may be beyond the reach of further subtle injustice. Then, also, I have hope, which never wholly deserts me, that the justice of God will some time prove my innocence to the world,—prove it before He summons me to His tribunal; and because of that hope, I would conceal myself at least a little longer from Cora. But tell me where I can wait for you and her to pass to-morrow." "On the morning Cora would take her music lesson from Clararunt. But Mildred feared that Mrs. Phillips as usual, would be in the way, either to accompany them from The Castle or to join them in coming from the professor's. Not being aware of Thurston's good offices in her behalf, she did not deem that Mrs. Phillips would alone inflict her society upon her as usual in The Castle, but that the little lady intended also to accompany her to Clararunt. It was true that on rare occasions Cora and she did take walks into the country beyond the village; she could propose such a walk the next morning, and she told him the time and the route they would take. His eyes glistened with pleasure.

"And you need not know me either," he said. "I fear if you attempted any recognition of me, I might be tempted into something that would betray me to her. And now you, of course, will be careful to say nothing of me to any one. Are you sure that you will not unconsciously betray having seen me? Do you swear that you will keep my presence very close, and that you will be in Eastbury a sunset from every one?" He spoke with an assumption of playfulness, and yet there was an evident desire that she would bind herself as he requested.

"I swear," she said, "to say nothing of you to anybody." And then, both anxious to end the interview lest its extreme length might cause the Hogans to wonder, he kissed her and led the way into the other room.

The traces of tears were yet on Mrs. Burchill's face, observing which Mrs. Hogan said: "It's no wonder you'd cry, poor dear, with the joy of meeting someone that knew your poor mother's people; and sure if Mr. Wiley'd like, Dick can get him work in the shop, he can board with us, and then you can be his own father." For which kind offer both Mildred and Mr. Wiley expressed their gratitude.

where the latter was putting on her own hat, "to be free from Mrs. Phillips; she hasn't been near us for a whole day. I must tell Mr. Thurston that at dinner to-night, for I told him yesterday what a tremendous weight it is. Mildred suspended the adjusting of her hat. "Oh now, don't look at it if it does anything dreadful," Cora hastened to say, quailing a little, before the look of reproach. "I couldn't help it, and I guess Mr. Thurston was ever so glad to know all about her, for I don't think he likes her a bit, but I know he likes you, Miss Burchill."

TO BE CONTINUED

EILEEN'S INHERITANCE

It was a big change from the gate lodge of Corwin Castle to the busy heart of Mayfair, and it was only her great love for her ladyship that kept her Ely D'Arcy, lonely and homesick amidst all the throng and bustle of London. From flying back bodily at the first opportunity to the longed-for green fields of her childhood, for a fair and pleasant place indeed had been Corwin, with its rolling lawns and wooded heights, sloping down to the edge of the Bagin River, singing its way merrily to the sea. Even the gate lodge, small though it was, had been an ideal place to live in, with its granite walls covered with creeping roses and woodbine that entwined themselves about each diamond paned window, and slanted red roof, and its encircling strip of flower-strewn garden and the golden sunlight under the trees, bending low beneath their weight of roses and ruscus fruit, the happiest days of Ely's young life had been passed.

"I think dear, it would be better for you to say nothing to your uncle and my great-grandfather," said Cora's great eyes opened wide. "Why? Uncle might know something about him," said Ely. "I think it would be better not to say anything to your uncle," was the reply; "he might think it a little dangerous to expose ourselves as we do on these long, unprotected walks and to prohibit us from taking them."

It was an immense honor, to be asked and Ely accepted it with a grateful heart, and though she faintly would have ruminated in Corwin had no one else's wishes and welfare but her own been concerned. Still she often wondered why she had grown so fond of it since she had neither father nor mother, kin or kin there, and it was not even her birthplace. But only Adey Beaman, the gardener and lodge-keeper, and his children's wife, Nancy, had been as good to her as any father and mother could ever have been.

It was not for five or six months afterwards that she had news of the girl again, and then it came as a wonderful surprise. In a letter from her bosom friend and neighbor, Lady Sophia Chalmers, the latter wrote: "You have heard of course, of the wonderful romance concerning your pretty young friend and protegee, your lodge-keeper's adopted daughter. It appears that instead of being the nobody we thought her she is quite an important person of good family and an heiress. Her father was a Neville D'Arcy, of Galway, a younger son, and a bit of a rake and spendthrift. His wife, a Miss Lebbell, of Waterford, and a very pretty woman, left him in a foolish fit of jealousy and temper, and broke her heart afterwards, they say. He had disappeared and most people, his wife included, thought him dead. But it appears he was living till three years ago, and ranching so prosperously in some place in America that when he died he left a very considerable fortune behind him. The American lawyers had been advertising for his heir, and it was only through some attorney with whose wife your young friend had recently taken a situation that she happily came to hear of her own good luck. This man, it appears, was struck by her name, and set inquiries on foot which left no possible doubt that she is the rightful heiress to all. And now, what are you going to do with her? Such an interesting, eligible party cannot be left where she is, quite content though they say she is quite content with her present homely dwelling, and not in the least degree attracted or even excited by the momentous change in her circumstances. It is so like the dear child not to be amused; Lady Katharine, with tears of joy in her eyes. 'What shall we do with her?' she said slyly, quoting half-aloud the words of her friend, Lady Sophia. 'I think I know—at least we shall see. And perhaps I may yet have my daughter, after all—that is, if she will forgive me.'"

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