

thing for him, because, because—oh because—ending with a sob, she loved him—loved him as she could never, never love any one else in this world."

As those last words were breathed forth rather than spoken, Gypsy sprung away from Bertrand's side and stood panting at the other side of the large writing table. For some moments neither spoke. Bertrand's eyes were fixed hungrily on Gypsy's white face with its downcast eyes. He felt he could scarcely take in all that Gypsy's words conveyed. He dared not take in all their sweet meaning.

"I dare say," Gypsy went on, "you despise me for what I have just confessed. I dare say you think me unwomanly. I have not forgotten what you once said about women who could do what I have just done. I dare say the world will condemn me as a brazen faced little!"

"Hush!" he cried, then he rose and stood before Gypsy, gathering both those small cold hands in his. "Child!" he began earnestly, with an agony of entreaty in his voice, "answer me truthfully. No, don't answer me, but speak as if you were now standing in the presence of your God. As if you were standing before the Teacher of all hearts. In the name of God, answer truthfully; is this love, the love you would have me believe, or only a tender pity?"

Gypsy didn't speak at first, then she wrenched her hands away and raised her eyes to his boldly—only to drop them instantly—"Oh" she almost moaned "do you suppose pity could have done what I have done? I tell you" with infinite scorn "You cannot even imagine the love—a love so great that it has smothered a woman's pride. Oh you can never guess what it has cost me! Oh the agony of having to confess to the man you love—that you have given your love unasked—unsought, and then to be asked if you have not mistaken that love for tender pity—You say to speak as if I spoke to my God. That is needless. I have already confessed to him all. He already has heard all my presumptuous folly. If you will think it pity, then think it pity!" Gypsy sprung towards the half open door, but someone's spring was greater than hers. He caught her, holding her firmly but with infinite tenderness in his arms.

"Let me go!" she gasped "Oh let me go somewhere—anywhere to get away from my humiliation. Oh, how could I ever have done it?" She struggled to free herself like some hunted animal. Bertrand lifted her up like a child, placed her on the sofa, and knelt beside her. She was too weary and exhausted now to resist. Presently Bertrand covered his face with Gypsy's small hands, and then she felt hot tears falling on them.

Instantly all her humiliation was forgotten; both her arms were wound round that bowed head, and she was whispering.

"Darling, darling will you love me a little bit. Can you love your wilful pupil? She loves you more than you can ever know! Oh you have been strangely blind."

"Even if I had not been blind, it could have made no difference Gypsy. I should always have been afraid that I was being influenced by my own selfish love. You are so much younger than I am, Gypsy. Can it be right?"

"What has that to do with it darling? Oh is there anyone in this world so noble, so utterly unselfish as you are? Yes I knew I owed you too much for you ever to tell me what I wanted to hear from no other man but you. I knew all my obligation—all my whole life debt to you—would keep you forever silent."

"Poor young Silvestre?" said Bertrand. "You have not treated him well I fear!"

"I told him instantly that it was utterly impossible. I did not know then even how utterly impossible. Oh darling, when I think of all you have done for me—all that you risked. Oh how can I ever repay you?"

"Child!" he murmured "if there is anything to repay, already you have more than repaid it. You have given me the one thing in life I yearned for. You have poured out on me all your sweet pure love, God bless you my little pupil!"

He rose and moved away "may God reward you for I never can."

"Reward me for having given you a little vixen—Ah you will soon change your mind on that point; remember a wife is a very different thing to a pupil. Remember a wife who has had the brass to propose to her husband is a woman not to be trifled with."

Bertrand only came back to the sofa; laying his hand reverentially on Gypsy's head; almost wistfully he spoke—"I shall never forget what it has cost me—" he hesitated, he was so afraid of frightening this child—as he thought her—of seeming to take advantage of her perfect trust in him.

"Your wife" whispered Gypsy.

"Yes" he answered softly "my wife if you ever will it so Gypsy." After a pause he went on "our positions will have to be reversed then. I shall have to vow to obey—Eh little pupil? But on one point I shall have to exact obedience and that is about the time given to Latin and Greek. Already I am beginning to feel jealous of those dead languages." "No," she murmured "that is impossible, I only learnt them with the hope of someday being able to help you. I wanted to grow near to you in some way. You always looked on me as such a child."

Almost hopelessly Gypsy spoke. Perhaps he understood her then as he never had—her love for him was recalled by those words as it had never been revealed before.

"Uncle Bertrand, tell me something truthfully, have you ever cared for anyone? Long ago did you ever love any woman?" "Once I thought I did, but lately I have known that I never have cared really for anyone but you Gypsy."

"Who was it?" presently asked Gypsy. He hesitated and then answered.

"Your mother." Gypsy's eyes opened, "Did papa ever know it?" "No," was answered gravely "Your father never even guessed it."

(To be Continued.)

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