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WM. BRAID & Co.
Vancouver, Canada



Out of the Struggle

(Continued from page 3)

in sloughing off deleterious influences could be put to better use by inculcating high ideals, she argued. Georgie had never played with children. Whether he did not care to, or was not permitted to, was a mooted question. As he grew older, however, it was only too evident that any social tendencies he might have possessed, were atrophied through lack of use, and he never went anywhere or did anything that a young man should have gone—or done. He did not even leave undone the things for which he might have been forgiven had they been neglected.

He was rarely seen abroad without his mother, and Mrs. Paget and Georgie formed an association of ideas as indissoluble as gaiety and Lothario, or miserliness and Scrooge.

He had no regular occupation. His mother's interference not only with him personally, but the business with which he had allied himself, had been the cause of his two failures.

"Georgie is happier at home writing," she said. "Aren't you, Georgie?" He always has been a close student of industrial problems and he is putting his ideas into a book. It will be the only thing of its kind ever written, won't it, Georgie?"

Elinor Haldane had felt too much contempt for Georgie Paget to be curious about him. Occasionally, she met him on the street or in some public building, but she paid rather less attention to him than the telegraph poles or the mosaic in the floor. Of course, he had never been formally presented to her. Mrs. Paget's circle was an exclusive one and did not include attractive young women in business life—it did not include young women at all.

The small inaccessible hotel, crowded to the edge of a pink limestone cliff by a grove of austere pines, and looking as though the first gust of wind would sweep it into the pansy lake below, was the last place where Elinor expected or wished to see Mrs. Paget and Georgie. She was too completely fagged in mind and body to be amused by them or interested in studying them, and her immediate sensation was one of annoyance.

"Of all the people—" she grumbled, wondering if, by any chance, they could know her by sight. She had vainly tried to find a refuge in which she would be the only guest.

IN HER determined effort to avoid the elderly, invalidish people who either sat and talked all day on the verandah, or just sat, it was inevitable that, sooner or later, she should collide with Georgie Paget, who seemed as anxious for solitude as she did.

The day was sullen, windy, threatening. Elinor had stayed in her room all morning; then, unable to endure her self-imposed imprisonment any longer, she put on her slicker after luncheon, and went down to the lake shore where her cat-boat lurched fretfully against the little dock.

She stood irresolute, looking at the ragged black clouds that seemed in such a hurry to get somewhere, and then at the angry little lake, on the surface of which a carpet of crinkly, white-crested waves ran before every gust of wind. The day was certainly not one to tempt a sailor.

She had just decided to turn back when there was a stealthy step behind her, and Georgie Paget broke through some low-hanging bushes just beside the dock and pushed a canoe into the water. Then he, too, looked irresolutely at the sky.

Seeing Elinor, he flushed with embarrassment and lifted his hat. She, usually the friendliest person, acknowledged this courtesy with an ungracious nod and stepped into her boat. Something in his hesitation roused her to a pitch of recklessness. "I will sail, anyway," she said to herself. "The sissy!"

Her boat leaped from the wharf like a restive steed freed from its rein, and for the next few moments she was too completely engrossed with it to watch the proceedings behind her. The wind tore at her hair and almost sucked the breath from her body; the spray bit sharply into her skin and the tiller bid fair to snap in her grip. A thin yellow gleam split the darkening sky, and following was a low, complaining growl of thunder. It would be foolhardy, she saw, to attempt sailing in the face of such a storm.

The wind dropped suddenly . . . a

dangerous sign. Immediately, Elinor put about, hoping to make the dock before the next gust seized her. But she was not successful. With a low whine it came, behind a giant V of foam on the drab water. Half-way across this ugly spot a canoe quivered, absolutely unmanageable in the hands of its inexperienced paddler.

"Be careful!" screamed the girl. "You'll get it broadside! Use your paddle like a lee-board." But, even as she spoke he flung out his arms in an effort to balance himself, and went under!

She never remembered how she came up in the wind, leaving a trail like a greasy arc on the lake, got him aboard, and kept afloat while the fierce storm raged. But she did know that Paget carried out her brusque orders intelligently, and that but for his help she would have been swamped a dozen times over.

It was dusk when they stood drenched and shivering on the little wharf.

"It seems rather silly for me to thank you," said he.

"Quite. I am equally in your debt. But for you, I could have never made a landing. Of course, I should not have gone," she conceded, generously.

"Nor I. I can't swim." "Neither can you paddle." There was a light in Elinor's eyes that robbed the words of their sting.

"I know. I am trying to learn up here."

"Then, will you tell me, please," she asked, "why, in the name of heaven, you chose a raging storm as a fitting time for your lesson? Or do you prefer suicide by drowning?"

"Not at all," he replied, laughing a little, "but it seemed cowardly not to take the same risk that a girl took."

THAT was the way it began.

It continued because Elinor found that in spite of gossip and her prejudices Georgie Paget was an exceedingly likable young man. True, he talked very little, but she enjoyed his intelligent attention; he was no sport, but he was willing to try anything, and his intense admiration for everything she did was an attitude that made its appeal even though she was accustomed to the homage of men. He had distinct peculiarities, femininities, but he also showed latent possibilities which made her suspect by the end of the week, that Mrs. Paget had not accomplished the complete wrecking of a man, and made her smile in a rather superior fashion when she overheard the fond mother boast: "I have never felt the need of a daughter. Georgie has always been a daughter to me!"

Elinor saw him every day. Between them there existed a tacit understanding which made these meetings seem entirely accidental. They occurred at an hour when everyone else was sleeping, for the afternoon nap was almost a ceremonial in the place. Thus, they deprived the verandah of much gossip. Elinor aroused some speculation—she was so alien to her surroundings—and Mrs. Paget looked upon her with frank disapproval, but no uneasiness, being sustained by the comforting thought that Georgie had never been allowed to do the things which would make him companionable to that "sporting type of female."

She would have been stunned had she come upon them drifting under the lee of the towering pink cliff, and shielded from any possible espionage, exchanging the most intimate confidences; had she known that her son was not only companionable but was rapidly making himself necessary to the girl with whom he had fallen, at first sight, deeply, desperately in love. Elinor, herself, was aghast, when the truth dawned upon her.

"Marry you?" she echoed, after he had, with unimagined passion and aggressiveness, insisted that she should. "It seems so perfectly absurd. You are so young—I feel like your mother, Georgie!"

"God forbid," he answered, devoutly. "And don't you call me 'Georgie', either! I am older than you think, my dear, and mark me—I intend to be the man of my family!"

She looked at him with unwilling admiration in her eyes. She did not want to think that her happiness was bound up in this strange fellow.

"I know what you will say," he went on, "that I can never command your respect or that of any one else because