



A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XL.

"It is drizzling with rain—one of those charming drizzles which gets into your ears and drives down the back of your neck and sticks you to your nose; and there is a cold, spiteful wind that makes you wish you were a man, so that you could swear, without being called unladylike; and the mud an ankle deep—the same colour and consistency as the brown sauces they always give you at the restaurants; and the houses look as if they wanted a good wash; in fact, it's one of those evenings when London looks at its worst. I should think the intelligent foreigner—I wonder why all foreigners are described as intelligent? they always seem to me excessively stupid—must wonder why we English are so proud of it, and why, being so rich, we don't pull it down, or pay one of the inventing Americans to invent a new climate for us. Yes; it's wet and muddy and dirty; but, oh, how I love it! I declare to you, Maida, that as I sloshed along just now, I wanted to sing; and I would have done so, only I was afraid that the passers-by might stop and hale me off to a lunatic asylum—fancy, singing in the streets, from sheer joy at being in London on such an evening as this!—if they had, you wouldn't have got this stuff for your new dress."

Carrie drew a flat parcel from under her cape and dopped it down on the table—on the same old table in the same, dear old shabby but comfortable room in Coleridge Street; for by sheer good luck they had found their old rooms just being vacated, and with a relief, almost amounting to joy on Carrie's part, had re-entered on them.

They had been back nearly a month now, and to both girls that momentous, almost tragic time in Australia seemed well-nigh a dream; but often Maida started from sleep, with a cry, as she woke from an actual dream in which she was once more confronting Robert Broseley in the lonely hut. Carrie had been very greatly, anxious about her when they started from Melbourne, for Maida was nearly worn out with the strain of that terrible time; but she recovered on the voyage during which the two girls received innumerable kindnesses from

their fellow-passengers and officers, and by the time she had reached London she was in perfect health and stronger than she had been since her parting with Heroncourt.

For a week or two they had remained quiet, Carrie insisting that Maida should rest; but their stock of money was giving out, and Maida would now have to face the world again and earn their living. In her heart of hearts she was not sorry that it should be so, for the tide of life was flowing strongly through her young veins, and though the loss and sorrow of her life would remain with her while life lasted, she turned to her art with the eagerness born of the conviction that only by work could she find consolation and solace.

She was sitting at the piano now working at her recitation which she was to give at a great house in three days' time, and the old dreamy look was in her eyes as she turned them to Carrie. She was still pale—the delicate ivory of her complexion was rarely tinted—but her eyes were bright and there was that little resolute curve of the sweet lips which was indicative of firmness and resolution.

"It's awfully pretty, I think," said Carrie, as she cut the string of the parcel in the reckless and extravagant way peculiar to her sex; "and I've got a pattern which will suit you down to the ground. It will be quite a treat to see you in an evening-frock again; and I mean to do your hair in the dear, old fashion, which has come in again, thank goodness! in a knot low behind, and not scragged up as if you were just going to wash yourself. How I did hate that style! No one has been, I suppose?"

She put the question casually, and began to hum with an air of indifference; but Maida did not deceive.

"No; no one has called," she said. "Very well, then; they can stop away," said Carrie, with a toss of her chin. "Out of sight is out of mind with some persons."

"But Ricky does not know we are in England," said Maida, gently.

"Oh, yes, he does," retorted Carrie. "You forget the paragraph which the agent put into the society papers announcing the all-important fact that Miss Maida Carrington had returned to England."

"Ricky may not have seen it."

"He reads all the society papers at that little pot-house he calls his club," said Carrie, grimly. "Young men have nothing else to do but read papers and smoke cigarettes. I bought 'Classy Snips' as I came along. Here's the paragraph, large as life. And there's one about the Glassburys. They're at Nice still."

"I am glad," said Maida, in a low voice.

She did not want to meet anyone who would remind her of Byrne. Lady Glassbury would ask questions, would insist upon pleading Byrne's "cause;" and Maida did not want anything to come between her and her work; she wanted to pretend to herself that she was forgetting Byrne; she wanted to forget that terrible time in Australia.

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She had written to Mrs. Broseley, thinking that lady for all her kindness, but had not attempted to explain their sudden departure from Milda Wolda, saying simply that she and Carrie had found that it was imperatively necessary they should return to England. The letter had cost her a great deal of thought and anxiety, and when, after many experiments, she had written it, it had seemed cold and ungrateful; but she could not enter into particulars, could not tell the fond mother of her son's villainy. She wanted to forget everything, to give the whole of her heart to her work which, with her love for Carrie, was the only thing that could make life endurable.

Carrie took off her hat and jacket and tidied her hair—it required constant attention, for she had "put it up" now, and, as is usual with young girls during the early stages of their mysterious operation, she was always under the impression that it was coming down—and at once set to work on the dress.

"Just like old times, isn't it Maida?" she said, cheerfully; but she checked a sigh notwithstanding; for where was Ricky, to romp with her as of old; though, of course, she was too old, with her hair up, to romp any more. "Why, what an idiot I am!" she exclaimed suddenly; "I've forgotten the lining. I never had many brains, and I seem to have lost what I had. Maida, I am strongly of opinion that it would do you all the good in the world to run into Tottenham Court Road and get the lining for me."

Maida smiled, for she knew very well that Carrie had "forgotten" the lining so that she might have an excuse for sending her out; for, in Carrie's opinion, Maida stuck to the house and her work too closely. She put on her out-door things and paused as she left the room to fondly stroke the recently done-up hair.

"Are you sure that you don't want me to go right to the end of Oxford Street?"

"No; I think Tottenham Court Road will be exercise enough for you tonight," said Carrie, blandly. "Is my hair coming down?"

Maida had been gone scarcely a quarter of an hour when Sarah, hall-marked by smuts as of old, put her head in at the door, and said, with her dear, old grin:

"There's a gentleman to see you, Miss Carrie."

Carrie's heart leapt—though, she might have known that Ricky would not come in that ceremonious fashion—and in walked Mr. Spinner with his elastic smile and his brilliant display of teeth.

"I am indeed fortunate, Miss Carrie," he said, glancing round the room as if her solitude was a relief and a satisfaction. "I only saw the notice in the papers this morning, and here I am, you see."

"Yes, I see," said Carrie; "it's very kind of you; it's nice to know that we are not quite forgotten by everybody. Won't you sit down? Maida has gone out; but she won't be gone very long."

"I hope you are very well?" said Mr. Spinner; "you are looking quite blooming and quite—quite old."

"Thank you," said Carrie, sweetly. "I will say this for you, Mr. Spinner, that when you do pay a compliment, you do it handsomely."

"I mean quite grown up. You are quite a woman. I declare! And how have you been all this long while? I am longing to hear your adventure out in Australia."

"You will have to long," thought Carrie, but she said, aloud, "Oh, we're both all right. How is Ricky—I mean Mr. Clark?"

"Mr. Clark has left my service," said Mr. Spinner, blandly.

"Oh," commented Carrie. "Indeed! Where has he gone?"

Mr. Spinner shrugged his shoulders as if the subject were of no consequence.

"I really do not know at present. As usual, Miss Carrie, my visit is one of business and pleasure. Always combine the two if you can, is my motto."

"What's the business?" asked Carrie, as she bit off a piece of cotton. "I came to ask you if you could tell me where to find Lord Heroncourt," said Mr. Spinner, with a series of nods.

Carrie shook her head. "Your business is a failure, then, Mr. Spinner. I haven't the least idea. I—we—haven't seen him for months and months; he may be in Jericho or in Jerusalem." She sighed. "Why do you ask?"

"I have some important business with him," said Mr. Spinner. "I raised no objections when he left England, because I thought he was only going for a short time; but now that months have passed and he does not return, and nothing is heard of him, I am naturally anxious. You may not be aware that Lord Heroncourt is heavily indebted to me."

Carrie shrugged her shoulders. "I'm sorry; but I don't know where he is. And that disposes of the business; now, what is the pleasure, Mr. Spinner? Did you say that Mr. Ricky—that Mr. Clark had not left you his address?"

"He did not, Miss Carrie," replied Mr. Spinner, succinctly. "And now for the pleasurable part of my visit, Miss Carrie, you may be aware that I am a man of some substance."

Carrie raised her eyes from her work and looked at the thin figure dubiously.

"I have a certain, shall I say considerable position in the world? I am a bachelor; there is no one to share my hearth and home, to—er—participate in the success which I have made in life. I have a fine practice, Miss Carrie, which is, I may say, with truth, on the increase. I want a partner."

"Why don't you advertise for one?" asked Carrie, innocently.

"Mr. Spinner put his head on one side and smirked.

"Not that kind of partner, Miss Carrie; not a business partner; but one of a more tender description. In a word, Miss Carrie, directly I heard that you had returned, I determined to carry out a purpose which for some time past I had been forming in connection with you. No one who has the privilege and happiness of enjoying your society could be insensible to your many charms; and I am, if I may say so, the most acute and appreciative of men. I say acute, because I foresee that you would develop into a most charming young woman; you have done so and have thus verified my anticipations. It is, therefore, without hesitation that I ask you to share my hearth and home and my well-earned prosperity."

Carrie dropped her work and stared at him.

"Eh?" she said, with her mouth slightly open, and an expression of perplexity on her pretty face. "Would you mind going all over it again? I've got it all wrong somehow."

"Surely you cannot misunderstand me, Miss Carrie," he said, with the wide grin that displayed every tooth in his head. "I am asking you to be my wife."

"What!" cried Carrie. Then she leant back in her chair and laughed until the tears ran from her eyes.

(To be Continued.)

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NOTICE! War Office, London, S.W. 1. Competition for Designs for a Memorial Plaque to be Presented to the Next-of-Kin of Members of His Majesty's Naval and Military Forces who have Fallen in the War.

1. The memorial is to take the form of a bronze plaque, with an area of as near as possible 18 square inches; e. g., it may be a circle of 4 3/4 inches in diameter, or a square of 4 1/4 inches, or a rectangle of 5 by 3 3/5 inches.

2. The plaque is to be produced by casting from a model, which should be finished with precision.

3. All designs submitted must be actual models in relief in wax or plaster of the size indicated in paragraph 1. No models on a larger scale will be considered, and no competitor may submit more than two models.

4. The design should comprehend a subject and a brief inscription. It is suggested that some symbolic figure subject should be chosen, but the following inscription has been decided upon:—

He Died for Freedom and Honour.

Since the surname of the person commemorated and the initials of his Christian names are to be engraved on the plaque, the design should be arranged so as to leave space for the name within the dimensions mentioned in paragraph 1. In the case of a rectangular design, this space should be left at the base; if the design is circular, a margin surrounding or partially surrounding it should be left free.

Competitors are reminded that the design should be essentially simple and easily intelligible.

5. Prizes to an aggregate amount of £500 will be awarded (in proportions to be subsequently decided), for a limited number of the most successful models. The award of such prize may, if the Judges think fit, be made conditional on certain modifications being made in the design. If none of the models submitted is, in the opinion of the Judges, of sufficient merit, no prize will be awarded. The names of competitors will not be revealed to the Judges, nor will the names of any but the pre-arranged artist or artists be published.

6. All competitors must be British-born subjects.

7. No framed models can be accepted, but each model should be packed in a small box and delivered to the Director, National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, W.C. 2, not later than 1st November, 1917. The model must not be signed, but should be marked on the back with a motto or pseudonym which should also be written on a sealed envelope containing the competitor's name and address. No other communication should be attached.

8. The models to which prizes are awarded shall be the sole property of the Government, who will arrange for the appearance of the artist's signature or initials on the finished plaque.

9. Further copies of these instructions may be obtained on application in writing to the Secretary, War Office, or to the Secretary, Admiralty, August 25, 1917.

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War News

Messages Received Previous to 9 A.

ANOTHER FRENCH ADVANCE Grand Headquarters of the French Army in France, Aug. 26 (By Associated Press).—The gallantry of French troops before Verdun continued forward again to-day when attacked between Mormont Farm, Lachaux Wood, and advanced over 1,000 yards, capturing 1,000 prisoners. Territory south Beaumont heights and woods almost the village of Beaumont fell to their hands, despite most German counter attacks which under vigorous fire from French artillery. The first attack in the morning was checked for a time, but distance of numerous nests of mine gins was overcome by the dexter dash of the French troops would not be denied. The German artillery which seems to be weakening has been heavily lately being retiring under pressure, but has been wild and little harm been done.

GERMAN ATTACKS REPELLED

LONDON, Aug. 27.—Strong German attacks were repelled last night on the Alsace and Verdun fronts. The war office announced that the assaults were broken up by the French fire, and that all French positions were maintained. More than 11,000 prisoners were taken to yesterday.

FURTHER BRITISH PROGRESS

LONDON, Aug. 27.—An official from British headquarters in France to-night reads:—Heavy rain has fallen throughout the day. This afternoon our troops attacked the enemy's positions east-south-east of Langemarck. First reports indicate that we have made satisfactory progress. The enemy attempted a raid on one of our positions north of Lens this morning, but was driven off with loss. Bombing and observation work for artillery were carried out vigorously yesterday by our airplanes. Enemy batteries, transports and infantry were effectively engaged with machine guns during the fine intervals the enemy air craft were active and aggressive. In the air fighting four German airplanes were brought down, three of which were driven down out of control. Two of ours are missing.

LESS QUIET

Canadian Headquarters, France, London, Aug. 27 (By Associated Press).—During the past few days the Canadians in front of Lens have had a period of comparative quiet and have been able to consolidate their positions recently captured with little retaliation from the enemy and with surprisingly little loss. There has been pushed out at favorable points and where trenches could be connected up to shorten the front line has been done. The general result is that our men hold a compact line which on that part of the front west of Lens is about 600 yards from the enemy's main defensive position on the eastern side of the buried out section by means of strong outposts located in a concave curve. The chief incident of operations on the front at the moment of writing occurred in connection with encounters between our patrols and those of the enemy in this queer No Man's Land of ruined houses. In a recent skirmish a German non-com. officer was wounded severely by his men who fled, leaving his wounds unattended. He was able to stay the flow of blood but could not drag himself back to his own line. Next day a Canadian patrol passed by on an outward trip and he tried to attract their attention. He failed then but on their return the patrol saw him and risked their lives in carrying him in. He expressed the views of German militarism when put into comfortable quarters in the casualty clearing station that would startle the gentlemen of Potsdam. During the clearing up of operations our men have destroyed three more machine guns and captured five, making a total of machine guns taken since August 15, forty-three. Twenty-one trench mortars are also among the spoils of war.

FRENCH COMMANDER CONGRATULATED

LONDON, Aug. 27.—(Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—Reuter's correspondent at British headquarters in France says that Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig telegraphed General Petain, Commander-in-Chief of the French armies, as follows, on the 22nd inst.: "All ranks of the British armies in France join me in hearty congratulations to you

And the Worst is Yet to Come—

