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TORONTO CANADA

His Little Girl

(Continued from page 23.)

with a wistful smile. "And—oh! Marion, I am so fond of children. I should like to have charge of this motherless girl. I am going to answer the advertisement directly," she added after a pause.

"Oh! Helen," Marion put out her hands imploringly, "but before you have spoken to Robert?"

"Yes—before I have spoken to Robert. I am not going to say a word about it to Robert, until it is all settled. If I don't get the post—well, then, I shall not tell him I applied at all. There is no law compelling people to tell their brothers all they do. But, if I do get the post, I shall just tell Robert I am proposing to undertake this work, and Robert will have to make the best he can of a bad job."

CHAPTER VIII.

GILES TREDMAN, seated at the writing table in his hotel sitting-room, looked with a perturbed face through letter after letter of a huge pile beside him.

"It's a big job to answer all these, but I haven't the heart to leave them unanswered," he reflected, "and some of the poor souls send stamped envelopes, some of the most obviously unfit applicants for the post too." He smiled sadly, whilst his eyes still travelled rapidly over letter after letter, each of which was laid aside when he had perused it, "none of them in the least possible," he exclaimed aloud, "and yet the poor ladies seem to be in such pitiable straits, one wishes one could engage them all. Of the four I have picked out, my own inclinations point to—wait a moment—I have a very good mind to let the child herself help in the choice. Why not? She has a shrewd enough little brain behind those great sad eyes of hers, and a child often sees further than do the rest of us. Sylvia," he called, raising his voice, "Sylvia, come in here a minute, I want you to do something for me." She answered his summons at once, a small, slim creature, looking younger than her years, because of her slimness, seeming to the man who watched her, pathetically childlike in her deep black frock, which enhanced the whiteness of her face and the sadness of her eyes.

"Come here, dear," the young man said, putting out his hand to her, "you know I have been trying to find a nice lady to come and take care of you, and be with you always."

"Yes, I know. But I'd much rather you took care of me," she answered simply, her eyes looking full into his grey eyes, "it doesn't feel so lonely when you're there,—and I—don't want mother quite so dreadfully then," her lips quivered, but she showed no other demonstration of feeling, and Giles drew her within the circle of his arm and laid a gentle hand upon the dusky softness of her hair.

"Poor little maid," he said kindly, "you shall be with me as much as ever I can manage, but you know, Sylvia, I have to be away a good deal; and by and by I shall be going back to India, and I'm going to be married before very long, and so I must find somebody to take care of my little girl for the present, until—"

"Until, what?" she questioned, putting back her head that she might look up into his face. "Some day shall I be able to stay with you altogether, all the time?"

"Some day, I hope," he hesitated. "Some day, when my wife and I are settled down in our own house at Manderby, I hope she and I will take care of you. But—"

"But I don't think she much likes little girls," Sylvia put in thoughtfully, her small fingers moving along the line of blue veins on Sir Giles' bronzed hand, "some people don't like little girls, you see, and—Miss Cardew doesn't."

Giles looked at the child with troubled eyes. He had tried to assure himself that his own uncomfortable convictions as to Grace's feelings had been only due to his imagination, and Sylvia's corroboration of those convictions struck unpleasantly on his ears. He had taken the child to the Cardews' house one

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