

## STORY OF THE WEDDING RING.

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### CHAPTER I.

Looking at them as they lie in the show windows of the vendors of old gold—wedding rings of every size—worn, bruised, taken, most of them, from hands that will never more be raised to caress or to threaten—who realize the tragedies that belong to their history? The love of which they were the outward symbol is known on earth no more—the wave of time has passed over it, obliterating all trace; but what poetry, what romance, what tragedy ever equalled the stories attached to these old, worn wedding rings?

I have a story to tell of one of the ring that Paul Waldron placed on his wife's finger—a ring of plain, thick gold. The birds that had built their nests in the grand old trees of Dene Woods were singing their vespers hymn; the forest glades, the dells and knolls, the dark, tangled shrubs, were all bathed in a flood of golden sunset light. On the eastern side of the wood stood the pretty little cottage that had been given to Paul Waldron for himself and his beautiful young wife—a cottage such as poets delight to sing of—all covered with wild roses and woodbine, and with trailing sprays of jessamine, its windows framed with flowers, its rustic porch overgrown with scarlet creepers, and its large, old-fashioned garden containing almost every sweet flower that grows. As it appeared now in the evening sunlight, the air so full of richest fragrance, the roses all about, the little brook close by singing as it ran, the birds filling the air with their joyful song, the cottage in itself furnished matter for a poem.

At the door, looking intently down one of the broad woodland paths, stood a young and most beautiful woman—Ismay Waldron, Paul Waldron's wife, the mother of the lovely little boy playing on the grass. She was only nineteen, and marked by great girlish beauty.

She had hair of shining brown, which looked like gold in the sunshine; it covered a head of most perfect shape and symmetry, raining in waving masses round a neck that also was perfect—it was such hair as the old masters loved to paint in their famous pictures of Mary Magdalene. She had eyes of an indescribable violet hue, with a golden light in their clear depth; they were bright and proud, but the long silken lashes softened them into wonderful beauty. Her brows were straight, and her forehead was white, rounded at the temples, and full of ideality. She had ripe red lips, the upper one short, the lower one full—a beautiful mouth that would have made even a plain face lovely; the chin was delicately moulded, and the curves of the neck and shoulders were full of grace.

Ismay Waldron was that most perfect of all poems—a beautiful woman. Her dress was quite plain, but the homely material only showed the marvelous beauty of her girlish figure to greater advantage. The hand that shaded her eyes was white and graceful. One might have wondered how she—living in a cottage, the wife of a man who worked hard for his daily bread—came by this dainty beauty, this delicate, graceful loveliness that would have been fit dowry for a queen. Suddenly her eyes brightened, and a low musical laugh came from her lips. She heard her husband's footsteps, saw him in the distance and hastened to meet him.

Paul Waldron had the true Norman type of face—dark, handsome, full of fire and power. He had dark eyes from which an undaunted soul looked out on the world, dark hair that clustered round a noble head, firm, well-closed lips, a tall, manly figure, a free, independent carriage and bearing, as though he felt himself to be any man's equal—and so indeed he did. His whole face changed and softened when he saw his beautiful young wife. "You are waiting for me, my darling," he said—"waiting and watching for me."

She clasped her little white hands round his arm, and they walked slowly home together.

"You have not been dull to-day, Ismay, I hope," said the young husband, questioning.

"Not more dull than usual," she replied. "Oh, Paul, make haste to be rich, and let us leave this 'quiet, homely little cottage!'"

His countenance fell as he listened to her. He drew the beautiful face toward him, and kissed it with a passion that knew no words.

"My darling wife, to me this little cottage is more beautiful than a palace; that is, because I love you so dearly, and it is our home. Do you not love it also?"

She smiled carelessly.

"Yes, but I cannot go into raptures over it. When we have a grand mansion—a large house full of all kinds of beautiful things—then I shall be as charmed as ever you wish me to be."

"But, Ismay, I must work long and hard, before attempting to find you a large house. Will you never be happy or contented until then?"

A slight shadow came over her face.

"My darling," she continued earnestly, "you will never believe me as you are now. You have sunshine and music all the day long; the birds sing to you, the little brook there murmurs sweetest melody. I am no poet, Ismay—not even an educated man—but I can hear all these. You have bright flowers, the beauty of the morning heavens, the glory of the sunset, the long gloaming, and soft, dewy nights. You will never be happier, sweet."

With a careless smile, she looked into his earnest face.

"I should like a large house best," she said.

"I have you here all to myself," he resumed, "my beautiful bird of bright plumage, and I can worship you as I do. Your beauty makes my heart glad—you love makes earth like heaven to me. But, if we were rich, and lived in the great world, you would belong to so many others; others would delight in your loveliness, and follow you with praise. You know those favorite lines of mine, Ismay?"

"'Tis in your eyes, my sweetest love, My only world I see; Let but their orbs in sunshine move And earth below and skies above May frown or smile for me."

"I should not like my beautiful wife to be admired by all the world. I am jealous, and would fain keep her all to myself."

"That is just what would please me," she said. "I long for this beautiful, gay world you seem to despise. The idea of passing my whole life in this pretty little cottage does not content me. I feel like a bird—I would fain stretch my wings and fly away." She looked laughingly at him. "Do you not think I am right, Paul. Answer me."

"No," he replied. "A woman should be content with the love and admiration she wins in her own home."

"I do not think," said Ismay, frankly speaking, that they will ever content me."

She did not perceive how her words jarred upon his sensitive nature. He had been holding her tightly clasped in his arms, but now he let his arms fall nervously. She looked up at him again with a smile that was beautiful to behold.

"Will it be so very long before you are rich, Paul?"

"I cannot say, Ismay. At present I have but little chance. I am Squire Schofield's steward; I keep his woods in order, and look after the farms. I have just sufficient money to keep our home—no more."

"But," she remonstrated, her lovely eyes growing dim with tears, "you told me that you would make money some day."

His face cleared; brighter thoughts evidently arose within him.

"That will be my patents, Ismay. I have something like a genius for mechanics, I believe. If I could but find time to work at one of my inventions, I think I could make a fortune."

"Then it is all uncertain," she questioned, despondingly.

He drew his tall figure to its full height.

"I am vain enough to think the contrary, sweet, I have now an idea—if I could but work it out—as to an inexpensive method of improving the working power of steam engines. If anything should ever come of that, I shall be a rich man, Ismay."

"Then you must turn your mind to it, Paul," she said, caressingly.

"My darling," he responded, wistfully, "I would rather be poor—ah, believe me, love—far rather. I am quite happy in this peaceful woodland life of ours; it seems to me ten thousand times more beautiful than anything that money could give; and it seems to me that if I won wealth I should in some measure lose you. Why, Ismay, the whole world would not compensate me for the loss of one atom of your affection!"

And again that deep and wonderful love of his seemed to master him.

"You think of nothing but love," she said. "I think of a thousand things besides."

He looked at her half doubtingly.

"I have read of women whose souls were not fully awakened," he said; "but that cannot be the case with you. My own soul came into full, perfect and beautiful life when I first saw and loved you. Money and luxury have no charm for me."

"They have a great charm for me, Paul. Of course I love you very dearly; but, when you have won for me all my heart's desires, I shall love you ever more."

The words were not kind; but she bent her lovely face near him with a smile that made him forget everything in the world except her.

"If I am to make a fortune," he said, suddenly, "I must study hard. Shall we have just one half hour out among the flowers? Afterwards I will get my books and do my best."

She accompanied him, and as they stood among the roses, Paul Waldron said to himself that no flower that bloomed was so fair as his beautiful wife. If it were possible, he would win name, fame, and gold for her sweet sake—he would study hard, toil that she might have the toys her heart was fixed upon.

"They are but toys, after all," he said to himself. "She loves dress and jewels—these are women's toys."

He took himself to task for having even for a moment felt impatient with her.

Should I feel vexed because the birds love the sunshine," he said to himself, "or the butterflies love flowers? They follow their instincts. My beautiful Ismay, in loving all things bright and fair, only follows hers."

"If money could not buy beautiful things, you would not care for it, Ismay," he said, looking earnestly at her.

She laughed aloud that sweet, musical laugh which stirred his pulses and thrilled every nerve as some soft strain of music would have done.

"You shall have money," he said. "I will never cease working until I have won for you your heart's desire."

To be Continued.

BORN WITH A SILVER SPOON.

The Marquis of Titchfield, son of the Duke of Portland, is heir to £4,000,000. He is 6 years old.

## STORY OF POOR CARLOTTA

THE MOST UNFORTUNATE EMPRESS OF MEXICO.

As Related By the Princess Salm-Salm—Deposed Queen To-Day Dwells in Mimic State in a Magnificent Brussels Restaurant.

Poor Carlotta! The memory of her is woven in among the saddest experiences of my life. I marvel greatly that the world has forgotten her—that there seems to be no heart throb of human sympathy to respond to the thought that for 33 years she has been confined in the royal retreat for an insane Empress at Palace Lacken, in the outskirts of Brussels, writes the Princess Salm-Salm.

As a member—a lady in waiting—of her Court in the City of Mexico, 34 years ago, I take up my pen to inscribe her story, the parallel of which is not contained in history, certainly not in modern history.

Carlotta, daughter of Leopold I, of Belgium, wife of Maximilian of Mexico, niece and namesake of the Duchess of Kent, cousin of Queen Victoria, friend of Eugenie, sister of the King of Belgium, although linked in countless ways to the present time, has yet been as one dead for a third of a century. In her own country her name is an unspoken one. In the City of Mexico many of the monuments and decorations of the city bear tribute to her memory, while at the castle of Miramar, in Trieste, the recent home of the late unfortunate Empress of Austria, are still many evidences of Carlotta's residence there.

Born a Princess and educated to wear a crown, now, although Carlotta has lived but 59 years, 33 of them have been passed within the walls of an asylum for the insane. Married at 17, a Queen at 24, and a lunatic at 26, she was bereft of father, husband, empire and reason in the short space of 18 months, and then, by the irony of fate, forever banished from human memory. Carlotta's career was almost kinesthetic in the rapidity of its changes—promising in its inception, magnificent in its rise, pathetic, dramatic, tragic in

ITS DECLINE AND FALL.

Although Carlotta was more potential in Mexican history during her short reign in that country than was her imperial husband himself, the records of that time ignore her efforts, belittle her achievements, and refer to her endowments of executive ability, political sagacity, mental culture and strong womanly character in the most impersonal and incidental manner. It was her regal training, her dominant spirit, her constant insistence, which prevailed over the weak, vacillating, easily influenced and almost effeminate character of Maximilian.

It was Carlotta's ambition, to be an Empress that was the cause of her misfortunes. Had she waited for the dawn of circumstances to unfold itself, she would have occupied the throne of Austria. For Maximilian would have succeeded Francis Joseph, his brother, whose only son, Rudolph, committed suicide.

If her star had reached its zenith later in the century, her memory would have lived, perpetuated by her sisters, not for the ambitious Empress, but for the high principle of genuine womanhood, evidenced by the good she did and the charities she dispensed.

The childhood of Carlotta was rendered serious with responsibilities and tuition beyond her years. Her mother, whom history has named the "Holy Queen," died when the little girl was 10 years old, and for several years the dark cloud of mourning overshadowed the palace. Court etiquette and queenly dignity, amounting to austerity, were constantly instilled into her brain and heart and made the deepest and most lasting impressions upon Carlotta's childhood. While yet a child she knew thoroughly the intricate rules of court precedence.

Her father educated her to be a Queen. She was precocious, and unwisely he forced upon her responsibilities far beyond her years. At 17 she was far in advance of her years in intelligence, and it was then that she met her hero, Archduke Maximilian, younger brother of Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria. He was tall and fair and gentle, of military bearing and spotless character, and eight years her senior. It was a case of love at first sight, and in two months they were married. She, ambitious, energetic, possessed of the executive force of a man; he, weak, vacillating, trusting in the goodness of men and

IDEALIZED INTO HER HERO.

For five years they lived at Miramar Castle, on the outskirts of Trieste, Maximilian having been appointed Governor of the Lombard-Venetian kingdom, and there Carlotta passed the few untrodden years of her life.

Then, at the very acme of all that was beautiful and harmonious in her life, the Goddess of Fortune appeared with her tempting offer of a scepter and a crown. It was the story of the Garden of Eden told again in different phase, and once more it was Eve who fell, for it was due to Carlotta's ambition more than to the importunities of the Mexican delegation that Maximilian finally accepted the golden apple of empire, and thus attained the instrument which was destined to play his own and his wife's

requiem. However, to the credit of Maximilian, be it said, the first offer was unqualifiedly declined, but when the delegation came the second time bearing what seemed to be proofs that a majority of all the people of Mexico joined with them in the request, he yielded, and the first act of the tragedy began.

The reception of the Embassy at the Castle of Miramar is a tableau which closes the last act of the drama of Carlotta's life before the curtain rose upon the tragedy. It presents a picture which in retrospect seems almost prophetic of strife, turmoil, sadness and despair.

Carlotta was the sacrifice upon the altar of nations and she was exactly 24 years of age, Maximilian 32, when their eyes beheld for the first time the land where they hoped to regenerate a nation. Their entry into the City of Mexico was a triumphal one. The splendors of their court were unprecedented, Carlotta knew how to be an Empress. I shall never forget her in her royal robes of state. She was radiantly lovely, lithe and graceful of figure, eminently befitting to adorn a crown.

The royal pair resided at the palace of Chapultepec, which is four miles from the city, on the outskirts of Tacubaya, at the extremity of the Paseo de la Reforma, one of the most magnificent boulevards in the world, and which, under the delicate touch of Carlotta's genius and taste, became and remains to-day, the most beautiful. The palace, or as it was then called, the Castle of Chapultepec, was at that time an uninviting mass of chaotic masonry, surmounting a gigantic agglomeration of boulders which some prehistoric seismic disturbance had projected out of the level plain. It was practically in the same condition in which the Americans left it after the battle which has made its name historic.

The beautiful park which surrounds it was neglected, the resort of wanderers, animals and bandits, and Carlotta's first work was its renovation. Her deft hand left its imprint everywhere among the giant cypress trees in the park, in the new and winding roadways, among the new statuary, in the re-erection of Montezuma's Bath, in every vista that the eyes sought and in every pathway upon which the feet could tread. Her own private garden was, and still remains, upon the roof of the castle, and there, among the favorite flowers, the young Empress and her husband passed their hours of leisure. There she tended the growing plants with her own hands; there no servant entered save under specific directions, and from it even the Emperor was excluded by his own order, except when invited to participate in its beauties.

BY ITS FAIR AUTOCRAT.

There are, to-day, growing trees and shrubs in Carlotta's garden, which were planted by her own hands, and there is in preservation a bed of violets which she planned and cared for. Stranger still, in that land of changes, the gardener who assisted Carlotta presides over this spot still. Old and bent, swarthy and forbidding of aspect, he speaks of Carlotta as reverently as he does of the Blessed Virgin. He keeps alive one human heart that has not forgotten her, and her bed of violets look just the same now as it did when she last knelt beside it, unconscious of the fact that the grand structure created by her ambition was to fall in ruins and rob her of everything she possessed save life.

Carlotta constituted herself President of the Woman's Charitable Society, and never during her stay in Mexico did she neglect the affairs of state, regarding which she was at all times her husband's chief adviser. There is no doubt that in the more important measures adopted by Maximilian she was the brains and potential element.

Then the United States interfered. Napoleon was ordered to withdraw his troops. Here again was Carlotta dominant and interceded with the Emperor.

What can be more pathetic than the spectacle of this girl Empress, then but 26 years old, pleading with the Emperor of France and the Pope of Rome for the means and soldiers to save from ruin the empire of her husband, at a time when Maximilian had been already many weeks dead, murdered by the people he had vainly tried to rule? The wife, pleading for the husband's preservation weeks after that husband was mouldering in his untimely grave! The Empress struggling against hope for the empire which had ceased to exist, for an Emperor was slain!

Carlotta's ambition and pride were crushed, her heart broken, and then God, in His infinite mercy, drew the veil of forgetfulness over the mind of this earnest woman in order that she might be spared the agony that must have been hers with the knowledge of her husband's awful death. Young—only 26—beautiful, ambitious, loving, on the very threshold of youth and hope, she was seized and torn from the world by the relentless hand of unreason and cast into the

MIDNIGHT OF UTTER BLANK.

For 33 years she has been banished to an oblivion that is worse than death. In Belgium her name is an unspoken one, but in Palace Lacken, on the outskirts of Brussels, she has passed a third of a century waiting for her soul's release from its useless prison. She believes that she is still Empress of Mexico, awaiting the return of Maximilian, who has gone at the head of his army to quell a revolt against his authority.

Since Carlotta entered her retreat she has been seen by no one outside of her household, which is conducted in an imperial manner from the fortress left her by Leopold I. Every month of the year Carlotta holds mimic court. The members of her household, which numbers more than 300 persons, are presented to her in the same ceremonial manner in which Queen Victoria holds her drawing-room.

She presents them with gifts, which

are formally received—the pictures taken from the walls of the palace are presented, and then the following day are restored to their places—merely to indulge her demented fancy. Every courtier and lady of honor plays the part assigned with mimic dignity.

The grounds surrounding the palace are very large, and there Carlotta drives about daily in her coach of state, with her cavaliers in attendance. There, too, she sometimes wanders among the flowers, planning improvements, as she did about the grounds of Chapultepec, in Mexico. Poor Carlotta!

## A SURGEON'S GREAT FEAT.

PNEUMOGASTRIC NERVE AND JUGULAR VEIN CUT AND SPICED.

And the Patient Still Lives—The Most Vital Nerve in the Human Body Mended With the Pneumogastric Nerve of a Dog.

The most daring surgical operation that has ever been attempted was successfully performed at St. Mary's Hospital, in London, last week. For 20 minutes the patient was practically dead. Respiration had to be maintained by means of a machine. The very centre of life had to be invaded. The surgeon had to cut through the carotid artery; they found it necessary to remove a piece of the jugular vein; they were obliged to divide the pneumogastric nerve.

The carotid artery is the one which supplies the brain with blood. The jugular vein is that which takes care of the circulation of the rest of the head. The pneumogastric nerve, which is sometimes called the vagus, is the impulse-bearing nerve, which makes the heart beat, which preserves the involuntary movement of the lungs and sends motor branches to the tongue and throat. Until recently, surgeons believed that a wound to either artery or vein or nerve meant sure death.

When Fellows first went to the hospital he complained of loss of voice and a swelling on the left side of the neck. The swelling was about the size of a hen's egg, and was situated just under the ear. If the swelling was touched the patient always began to cough violently.

A laryngoscope was used upon Fellows, and it was seen that the left vocal chord lay motionless and in the same condition and appearance as if it belonged to a corpse. The right vocal chord was natural. Absolutely nothing else could be seen.

Because of the pain and suffering which Fellows had undergone, he was advised to submit to an operation, so that the nature of the swelling could be positively determined. Dr. Stansfield Collier, who operated, made a small exploratory cut just at the angle of the jaw, and dissected gently down until the swelling was reached.

A TREMENDOUS TASK.

Then for the first time, the surgeon understood and appreciated what a tremendous task lay before him. The swelling was no mere glandular enlargement, as had seemed probable, but was, instead, a malignant tumor, and was inextricably involved with the sheath of the carotid artery. The growth also surrounded the jugular vein and the pneumogastric nerve. Dr. Collier was not dismayed at the magnitude of the operation necessary to effect a cure. He determined to ligate both the carotid artery and the jugular vein—that is to say, to tie up both artery and vein so that no blood could pass through them. Ligatures were accordingly placed upon the jugular vein and the carotid artery at a point close to the collar-bone and the vessels were divided. A big machine by which artificial respiration can be maintained for a length of time was then brought to the side of the operating table to be ready for instant use, and then, with a touch of his knife, the physician divided the pneumogastric nerve. The patient's breathing stopped at once. To all intents and purposes Fellows died at that instant. There was a tiny flutter at the pulse, but it stopped instantly. No movement of the heart could be perceived, and there was no involuntary attempt to resume respiration. Instantly the tubes of the artificial respiration machine were connected with the lungs of the patient, and the regular panting of the machine sounded through the operating theatre. At the same time an electric battery was brought to bear on the heart, stimulating it to regular contractions. Apparently unmoved by these occurrences Mr. Collier continued his operative work. The growth was dissected away from its adhesions to the neighboring tissues and was then lifted from its place. It brought with it fully three inches of the carotid artery and the jugular vein, as well as a large piece from the side of the nerve.

THE CRISIS PASSED.

Then an even more daring piece of surgical work was done. A piece of the pneumogastric nerve of a dog was then handed to Mr. Collier and he carefully approximated it to the damaged nerve in Fellows' neck, and fastened it in place. As the repair was made Fellows began to breathe of his own accord, and the artificial breathing apparatus was removed.

The remainder of the operation was simple. At its close the patient was much collapsed, but he soon rallied. Fellows' recovery was uneventful, and he rapidly improved in general condition. For some time there was paralysis of a branch of the nerve which runs to the eyelid.