



A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XIV.

"She's a sweet child," said Maida, looking at the mite perched on his shoulder, and looking out of the tail of her eyes at the owner of the shoulder. "But you shouldn't give them pennies," she added, severely. "I don't; it's never less than a shilling. Oh, it's all right, they share it with the others—as a reinforcement bore down upon them. 'Come along or we shall have to surrender unconditionally.'"

They went off together, and Heroncourt, to keep her with him, talked of the children they had escaped and their condition. It appeared that the parents wanted new cottages; the children wanted new schools; the church wanted a new roof and bells and seats; the men wanted a reading room, and the women wanted sewing clubs.

"And I wish they'd get them," he said, with an assumption of indifference which did not deceive Maida.

"Yes, I am sure you do," she said, very quietly.

"Yes, I do," he admitted with a touch of suppressed fierceness. "And I wish I didn't; I didn't care a fig a few months ago—"

"Ah, but a great deal can happen to change us in a few months!" she said, with her rare smile. "I turn up this lane. Thank you for telling me so much, Lord Heroncourt."

He raised his hat and stood bare-headed looking after her. He had admired her for her beauty, was well-nigh loving her for it; was he going to adore her for her goodness?

They met nearly every day, at dinner parties—the dinner party at the Towers was as great a success as that of the Court, and it put the coping-stone to the Carringtons' popularity, for Maida rectified and set the whole county ablaze with her name and extraordinary talent—sometimes at garden-parties, and sometimes in the green lanes and the village, where Maida's presence as a general guard-

ian angel and Lady Bountiful was frequent.

And Lord Heroncourt was not happy. You see, when he was away from her he was longing to be near her; and when he was by her side he was discontented and devoured by that aching longing which comes to the man and the woman when they love. He fought against the spell that was working its charm over him, and tried to keep away from her, to banish her from his mind, for the thought that he was poor and she was rich, the loathing for the construction which the world would put upon his love, if he declared it, made him resolve to crush out that love.

But the gods smile at man's struggles with his fate, and, when it pleases them, just push him across the board like a chess-piece.

One afternoon the two girls and their father were coming over the hills from a long walk; they were walking rather fast, for Ricky was coming by the five-o'clock, and Carrie had set her mind upon meeting him. "Come along, father," she said, "we shall just be able to do it. I wouldn't miss meeting Ricky for a king's ransom. I want to drive him home in the dog-cart—"

"I should have thought the carriage would have been more suitable and comfortable; and it's going to rain; it's making for a storm," said Mr. Carrington, puffing—for, like Hamlet, he was fat and scant of breath. "And more dignified, if you will permit me to say so, my dear."

"That's just why I am going to take the dog-cart—fancy me and dignity! Besides, we sha'n't melt. I'll take a mackintosh for Ricky; he's sure to have forgotten one. What are you stopping for, Maida? If it's going to rain you'd better get home or you'll take cold, and then what would Lord Heroncourt say—"

"Lord Heroncourt!" said Maida, with a touch of colour on her cheeks, but a look in her eyes that made Carrie add, quickly:

"I mean all of them, if you are not able to recite at the Percys' tomorrow. Do come along!"

"I must go down to the village," said Maida in her quiet, decided way. "I promised to read to that poor girl of Mrs. Oatway's. I shall not hurt; I have a cape on; and I will go through the plantations, where I shall be sheltered. Give my love to Ricky."

"Most absurd, this—this district visiting of yours, I must say, Maida. You'll catch the measles or scarlet fever or something."

"It is consumption in this case, father," said Maida.

Carrie, knowing that remonstrance was useless, shrugged her shoulders. "Well, look sharp and come back to tea!" she called out as Maida turned off at the lane. "Oh, what a gust! There's going to be a storm! Tell poor Martha I will send her some more books."

Maida went on quickly; but the storm, which had been threatening for some time, was still quicker, and before she had reached the plantation the black sky sent down the beginning of a torrent of rain; the wind stopped while the rain fell, but when the shower ceased the wind rose again with renewed force. The plantation

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was a comparatively new one, and the young trees bent under the scouring blast.

Maida was not a nervous girl by any means; but as a sapling elm came down with a swish almost in front of her, she stopped and looked round her, rather inclined to go back; but to go back was to face a danger almost as great as that which she would meet by going on, and she continued her way, keeping a sharp lookout for the swaying trees which threatened to fall at every gust.

But presently there came a terrific wind which howled like a pack of demons through the wood, and she stopped uncertainly, drawing her cape round her. Her hesitation was only momentary, however, and she went on again. She was fearful now; but with the fear was joined a strange excitement which thrilled her, the charm woven by the fierce hands of the Storm Fiend. Her heart beat swiftly, the young blood ran hotly in her veins. If she were to die, how better than this, with this grand chorus of the heavens as her requiem?

"It is worth the risk!" she murmured. Then, as the words left her lips she shrank back with a faint cry. An elm rather larger than the rest, and right in the way of her path, bent downwards suddenly with a crushing of its breaking branches and a shrieking of its strained roots.

She looked up, unconsciously putting up her arm as if to shield herself, for the tree seemed falling straight upon her. Death and she looked, for the first time, in each other's face. A prayer rose from her throbbing heart, and she shut her eyes, for she felt as if she had not the power of moving.

Then suddenly she heard a cry—was it a human cry or the sound of tearing branches and rending roots?—and felt herself caught up and swung aside. The next moment the elm fell with an awful, sickening thud; and she tried to put up her hands before her face.

But she was held fast, and, looking down mechanically, she saw an arm encircling her. She raised her eyes, and Heroncourt's were looking into them.

She did not speak—she could not. She could not even withdraw her eyes, for something in his held her

by a spell more potent than even the fear which had stricken her motionless.

"My God, how near!" he said, hoarsely. "What are you doing here? No, don't speak! You are frightened. Come—this way! Ah, you can't walk, can't move! I know! I know!"

He raised her in his arms and carried her—was it only a few steps or a long way? she did not know—to a comparatively clear space.

She caught her breath, fought for her words, as she put up her hands to her head. The wind had swept off her hat and blown her hair loose, and it was partly flowing over her shoulders.

He held her in his arms, almost strained her to his breast. His face was white, his eyes glowing with something more than fear on her account; and his breath beat hotly on her cheek.

"Maida!" he panted. "Maida! Oh, thank God! If it had fallen—if it had killed you! Oh, my dearest!"

A shudder shook him silent; but his lips still moved.

She gazed at him as if she scarcely heard—comprehended; then suddenly the blood rose to her face and a startled look came into her eyes.

His arms fell away from her and he slipped to his knees—the man was shaking with the horror of her danger—and catching at her hands he pressed them to his lips.

"Maida! Don't you know? I love you! I love you! Forgive me, forgive me! But to find you here, to see you so near death. Death! You! Oh, if you had died—Dearest, dearest, I love you! I love you!"

(To be Continued.)

Household Notes.

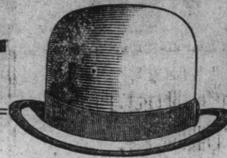
It is a good idea to have mustard and flour already prepared and kept in the medicine closet, then in case of hoarseness and cold, water may be added and a plaster made without having to go to the kitchen to hunt for the mustard box.

If lemons have become dry, do not throw them away. Put them in a pan of hot water and put it where it will remain at about the same temperature without boiling, for two hours. After that the lemons will be soft and juicy.

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To-Day's Message

10.30 A.M.

REGULATING COAL PRICES.

WASHINGTON. Assurances that the and public will be furnished at reasonable prices was given by representatives of both coal interests, who agreed, after conferred with the National Council's Coal Committee, to answer by Secretary Lane and the Interior and Navy and others that unless the coal fair prices and proper their output would be the Government. The price to be determined with Council's coal committee by a special Producers' which aims to increase and facilitate distribution.

RUSSIAN MINISTER OF

PETROGRAD. Lt. LeBedoff has been with the Russian Provisional Ministry of Marine. This the present has been held of War Kerensky.

SMALLER SHIPPING

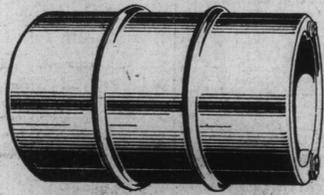
LONDON. The aggregate number of the British flag ships falling off of five as compared with the previous year, the losses reported the previous year, 27 of 400 tons, and five in the vision.

MONGOLIA EVIDENT

LONDON. The Mongolia was bound. Full details of the not yet been received here formation so far as hand dictate precisely whether the sengers and crew were safe.

LANDING OF AMERICAN

WASHINGTON. The successful landing of (can troops) while a source of information to officials here, the point of being a military is regarded as an



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