



The Sound of Wedding Bells

Won After Great Perseverance!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

There is such deep sadness, such complete confession of weakness and error, such regret for the mistake that he has made, that the tender heart of the girl is touched.

"No, no!" she pants, "I shall not forget. Do not ask me. Do you think I am made of wood, of stone, that I would forget?"

"I know," he says, "now that it is too late, that I have misjudged and wronged you. If you will not forgive me, at least, Dulcie, you will promise me to forgive! Think of one who loved you as dearly as it was possible for man to love, but whose jealous nature led him to misunderstand the light, unshackled willfulness of a young, inexperienced girl. Think of me as one who looks back upon the past with sorrow and regret, and upon the future with only one hope—that the girl whom he loved so deeply and passionately may know nothing but joy and happiness."

It is a long speech for Hugh the silent, but he needs must say it; it is the last word she will hear from him on this side of the great river, and he says it with infinite tenderness and earnestness. Then he holds out his hand.

"Good-bye," he says—"good-bye, Dulcie! I may call you so for the last time!"

A faint thrill runs through her; her heart is wrung at his sorrow and loneliness. She forgets her own happiness, forgets herself, forgets even Archie, and she holds out her hands to him with a sob.

"Oh, Hugh!" she murmurs, brokenly, with a little catch in her sweet voice, "must it be? Must you go?"

Deal not hardly with her. Be merciful, you who have gone with us through the changing scenes of this little comedy. Do not designate her as fickle and treacherous. Her heart is still Archie's, and her faith and honor bright and intact, but—ah, that but!—only those who have loved and lost, and have met the lost loved one to say good-bye forever can know what she feels now, can understand her. To those who cannot understand her, I who tell her story have nothing to say.

"Oh, Hugh, must you go?"

The words, infinitely tender and pitiful, float on the night air, and go straight to the man's soul. In an instant his blood tears through his

veins, and his heart leaps with a wild bound of mad hope.

A wild, mad hope the words rouse in his heart, but to the heart of another man who, all unseen and unheard, has come to a standstill within hearing, they go straight as a dagger thrust. It is Archie returning in hot haste from the stable, all unsuspecting and eager to rejoin his goddess, and he comes just in time to hear what sounds to him as a confession of her love for Hugh.

For a moment he stands paralyzed and turned to stone, to a statue, with a wring and agonized heart, then with a groan he staggers away and sinks on to a stone in the lane that he may hear no more.

"Dulcie!" Hugh murmurs, hoarsely.

"Don't go, Hugh!" she pleads, the ears running down her cheeks. "I—I cannot bear it! I cannot forget! Heaven help me! I cannot. You will not go? To leave home, and friends, and those you love because one wretched, miserable girl has been false to you! No, no! You will not go!"

"Dulcie!" he breathes, hotly, fiercely, "what is that you say? Am I dreaming or mad? Is—it is not too late? Do you still—oh, Heaven! Don't tempt me to plead for myself! Don't wake the old passion in me! Do not tempt me! Yet—Dulcie, tell me. Do you—ah, Dulcie!—do you still love me?"

At the words her brain reels, a mist seems to come between her and him, and she puts out her hands blindly, like one benumbed.

"Speak!" he murmurs, fiercely, and he holds her hands tightly. "Tell me! It is not too late—no, not too late! Look, Dulcie, it is I—Hugh! The Hugh who loved and still loves you with all his heart and soul! Speak, Dulcie, my darling—my lost love!"

With a cry she rouses and tears her hands from his grasp.

"No, no," she murmurs, putting her hands to her ears and staring at him wildly. "It is not you, not my Hugh who comes to tempt me to break my faith, and fling truth and honor to the winds! It is some—some—devil in his shape! Go, go! I will not—I will not listen! I will not speak—"

"Hush! hush!" he says, suddenly, calmed with a deadly calm. "I—I understand. Heaven forgive me! It is too late. Dulcie, forgive me! I mistook pity for reawakened love! Forgive me! Good-bye! Good-bye! Will you touch my hand—once, but ever so lightly, that I may know you forgive me?" and he holds out his hand.

She puts hers hesitatingly, almost shudderingly, into it.

"Good-bye," she murmurs, hoarsely, "good-bye!"

He leans over her hand as a devotee might lean over the hand of his patron saint, and with the lingering look of a man who sees his greatest treasure sinking, fading from his sight, he turns and leaves her, and she, drawing her cloak around her, speeds up the lane as one who flees from some awful peril which threatens to overwhelm and destroy her.

With bent head and knitted brows, with pale, haggard face, like that of a man who has received his death warrant, Hugh strides down the lane, so absorbed in his bitter reflections that when a voice rises from the dimness, calling him to stop, he scarcely hears; then, as the word is repeated he pulls up and looks to the direction whence the voice came.

A man is sitting on a stone, and he rises as the other stops and confronts him.

Hugh draws nearer, then he starts. "Archie!" he says, hoarsely.

"Yes, it is I," says Archie, and he

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puts his hand to his brow with a stunned, dazed gesture. "Wait a moment, will you?" and he sinks on to the stone, trembling and overcome; but he struggles against the weakness and rises again, the cold sweat standing upon his forehead, his hands trembling.

"Yes, it is I, Hugh," he says, and his voice is sad, unsteady, and thick. "I—we know each other, Hugh, and—and you will not think that I would play the part of an eavesdropper?"

Hugh starts, and puts up his hand, but Archie stops him quietly.

"Don't speak. Let me say what I have to say. Hear me patiently. Don't think that I am going to reproach you. I shall not. Whether it was a true man's part to come down here—"

"I did not know," says Hugh, almost inaudibly, but solemnly and earnestly. "I swear to you, Archie, as man to man, that I did not know that—that she was here. We met by sheer accident."

"I believe you," says Archie, simply. "We have never lied to each other, you and I, and it is not likely that we shall begin to-night. I believe you when you say that you did not expect to meet her, but—and he groans, "Heaven help me, you have met!"

"Wait; hear me out. You have met," he says, "and—and—all is changed. I do not blame you; a man who once loved her must love her while life lasts, let happen what may. I do not blame her—Heaven forbid! Not I always doubted whether my happiness—such perfect, unnatural happiness as mine, could last. More, I always feared—it was a presentiment, I suppose—that—that her heart was not wholly mine; that the past, the accursed past—bear with me, Hugh—still dwell in her remembrance and held her, as it were, in thrall."

He pauses, and his hand goes trembling to his pale, dry lips.

"If—if"—he goes on, with an effort—"if time had been given me, if we had once been married, and she very my own, I do not doubt—I have never doubted—that I could make, ay, make her forget the past, and—youth! But—with a heavy sigh—"it was not to be. Try as she would, and she did try, Heaven bless her! to love me, it wanted but a sight of you, a word from your lips to teach her how utterly useless it was to forget you and turn to me!"

"Stop! stop!" cries Hugh, hoarsely. "You have misunderstood—"

"No," he retorts, with a bitter smile, that is perhaps more sad than bitter. "I know her too well to misunderstand her. There is not a tone in her voice that I do not know—not a look in her sweet face that I cannot read. No, it is not I who misunderstand her!"

There is almost a taunt in the voice, but Hugh does not resent it; he lowers his head upon his breast in silence and in penitence. He did misunderstand her to his cost.

"I could never misunderstand her, because I love her. And now what remains to be done? Before me my path lies plain and clear. Before her happiness everything must give way. My love and my wishes are nothing—mere chaff blown aside by the wind. Hugh—though I curse the day you met her—though I know as surely as I stand here that I should have made her happy but for you—I yield her to you."

"Stop!" exclaims Hugh, at last. "You shall hear me! I say that you have thoroughly misunderstood. You tell me that you have overheard us; then you have only heard part of our conversation."

"I do not care," says Archie, almost

fercely. "I heard enough. If it were only two words—a single sentence—I heard her heart speak; and I know—that she loves you still!"

Hugh wipes the perspiration from his brow, and looks at him with wild, agard eyes.

"Is it so?"

"No matter what else she said to you. Those words I heard, coming from her heart of hearts, surprised me into speaking the truth, told me that I feared was true; that the past still held her, and that she could never be mine. If you think," he goes on, with sudden fierceness, almost threatening, "that I yield her too readily, remember that it is not for our sake. If it were any other man's worthy of her, I would do it. As for you, I wish that you had died, or that I had, before you met her. But for her happiness, I could kill you where you stand. When I think of all that I have borne"—his voice falters, and he moistens his lips—"when I look back and remember how long I have loved her, before that accursed night when I—fool that I was—met you in Rome, and persuaded you to meet her! when I look back and remember what I have suffered, and all for nothing—for nothing, save the bitterness of yielding her to you—I could crush the life out of both of us!"

Then, as Hugh stands silent and motionless, his voice breaks into something like a sob:

"Forgive me," he says, hoarsely. "I am almost mad to-night. After all, it was not your fault. She would have loved you if I had not been on the scene. But—fercely—"it was your fault that, having once gained her love, you let it go—cast it from you like the swine casts aside the pearls!"

"Go on," murmurs Hugh, "do not spare me. I was a weak fool. No words of yours can sting me more sharply than my own conscience. I was a mad, weak fool!"

"Yes," retorts Archie, bitterly, "and the fool who left her come back and takes her from the man whose love has been constant and unchanging! It is the way Fate mocks us. There! you have borne with me; it is the last harsh word I will use to you. You can well bear them, setting them against all that I am giving you. (To be Continued.)"

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Household Notes.

Fresh fish have eyes bright and full, gills red, and fins that stand up and the flesh is firm to the touch.

To make a cake light, add a few drops of glycerine in the proportion of a teaspoonful to a pound of flour.

New gas mantles if immersed in vinegar and hung up to dry will give a more brilliant light and last longer.

Carbolic acid is powerless as a disinfectant unless diluted with at least twenty times its bulk of cold water.

If white kid gloves are rubbed gently with bread crumbs after each wearing, they will keep clean much longer.

If you add a few thin slices of white soap to the water before putting flowers into it they will keep longer.

Add a little lemon juice to water in which peaches are dropped before cooking. The fruit is not so apt to discolor.

To keep pies and pastry flaky, do not put them away until they are entirely cold, and never put them in the refrigerator.

Excellent shortcakes may be made with biscuit crust and raspberry jam.

Gooseberry jam also is a good filling.

If eggs and grated cheese are added to some of the simple cream soups one has an excellent substitute for meat.

A spoonful of flour added to the grease in which eggs are fried will prevent them from breaking or sticking to the pan.

In the household where children are it should be the rule to use sugar only with other foods and at the close of a meal.

Salt put on a cloth saturated with kerosene will clean the enameled bathtub. Afterward rinse the tub with warm, soapy water.

Kitchen tiles if washed with vinegar before being scrubbed will be very white. The vinegar removes the stains from the wood.

To clean brass trays, sprinkle with coarse salt, cover with sufficient vinegar to wet the salt, rub thoroughly, and polish with leather.

By using various colors to mark clothing, each child having its own color, much time may be saved in sorting and putting away clothing.

Curious Walking Feat.

The most curious walking feat in Scotland dates back to a former century, when Sir Andrew Leith Hay and Lord Kennedy did a great walk for a bet of £4,500. Hay said he could walk from Blair Hall in Kincardineshire to Inverness in less time than Kennedy.

They started off that very night at nine o'clock, in their evening clothes, with their shoes and silk stockings. Sir Andrew took the coach road via Huntly and Elgin. Lord Kennedy, with Captain Ross as umpire, went straight across the Grampians in pouring rain. They walked all that night, all next day, and the following night Lord Kennedy got to Inverness at six o'clock in the morning of the third day, and won his bet by four hours.—Tit-Bits.

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War News

Messages Received Previous to 9.15

WAR REVIEW.

The all-important Inter-Allied conference has begun its sessions. Delegates were represented at the meeting, and much is expected from the discussions and decisions of the Conference in the way of co-ordinating and carrying on the war against the Central Powers and the utilizing of the great resources of the Allies. Important meetings of the War Council composed of representatives of the United States, Britain, France and Italy will be held during which military operations in the Western front will be considered.

There has been little change in various war fronts, according to the meagre information coming from the capitals of the belligerent countries the last 24 hours. The British are pounding hard along the Cambrai sector. The town of Brai is now directly under the British guns. The batteries of the 1st Infantry for the possession of the Notre-Dame and between the Meuse and Bourlon has ceased to exist but at times the artillery has been of great intensity in those regions. Poelcapelle and between the Meuse and Cheluvet and in the Meuse the big guns of both groups of heavy artillery are maintaining a heavy bombardment. After violent operations, the Germans in great numbers undertook a raid north of the Champagne, but were beaten by the French troops who inflicted losses on them. Two other raids were made near Bethincourt on the west of the Meuse and the other near Faux les Damloup on the east. They also were repulsed, while a raid on the German lines in the west of Aire was carried out carefully and resulted in the capture of some German prisoners.

Along the entire Italian front batteries of both armies are maintaining a violent bombardment. No infantry actions are reported in this theatre of war. The German office reports that the Italian against Austro-German positions on the west bank of the Brenta and on Monte Tabor.

News from Petrograd—There are no exact details of the operations in Russia are available.

EAST AFRICAN CAMPAIGN.

LONDON, Nov. 29.—The end of the East African campaign before Christmas is predicted by Reuter's correspondent. He declares that by the end of the German Commander-General Hertling in the prisoner of war.

HERTLING IN THE PRISONER.

BERLIN, Nov. 29.—Count Geo. F. Von Hertling, Imperial German Chancellor, Reichstag to-day he was admitted into peace negotiations as the Russian Government sent representatives, having just now Berlin. "I hope and expect that these efforts will soon take shape and bring us peace." Count Von Hertling said. "We see right and self-determining peoples. We expect that will themselves a constitutional Government corresponding to conditions."

Von Hertling presented before the Reichstag to-day and delivered a long speech, in which he upon all the current problems of internal and external significance some personal observations on the war the Chancellor related home politics of the Empire, to the introduction of the franchise proposal and the government's new measure of social and political legislation.

