

# The Earl's Mistake

"I made neither best nor worst," he says, gently, in the tone which always does more to soothe Carrie's bursts of excitement and petulance than a torrent of remonstrance. "I just told her that you were beautiful—as beautiful as any woman I had ever seen."

"Cecil!" with a scintillating flush.

"That I loved you and that you were all the world—with them, my father and mother—to me; and that I could not live without you!" and his dark eyes glow with sudden passion.

With a little sigh, that is out a laugh and half a sob, she puts her arm shyly round his neck and leans her head on his breast.

"And—then—what did they say?"

"They said—my father, that he was glad to hear so good an account of you, and my mother—but she shall speak for herself," and he takes a letter from his pocket and gives it to her.

"For me? Oh, Cecil!" and she takes it with a little tremor.

The large square envelope bears the big coat-of-arms emblazoned on it—the coat-of-arms that had so excited her scorn and ridicule a month ago—a month ago!—and she looks at it thoughtfully.

"Aren't you going to open it?" he says.

She shakes her head.

"Not now," she says, shyly.

"Very well," he says with a smile, understanding her feeling. "You must tell me what it contains after dinner."

"Yes," she says; "at any rate—at any rate—I am not rejected, Cecil. They do not think that you have sacrificed yourself by asking a farmer's daughter—your Viscount Neville—to be your wife?"

He smiles gravely as he puts on his hat.

"When you know them better you will understand how impossible it would be for them to do that," he says. "Besides," he goes on musingly, "they were so delighted at my escape from that peril—"

He stops with a start, aroused to a sense of his words—uttered rather in self-commission than to her—by the look of astonishment on her face.

"Your escape—peril—what do you mean, Cecil?" she asks, wonderingly.

A dark flush passes over his face and leaves it pale and grave for a moment, then he laughs rather constrainedly—and at the moment there flashes upon him an intense regret that he has not told her what that escape and what that peril was.

"Nothing, nothing!" he says, not truthfully—he never speaks hurriedly. "They were referring to something that had happened in the past, and of which I will tell you some other time. Suffice it for the present that it is one of the very slightest consequence now."

She looks at him half perplexed, half troubled, not half satisfied.

"Cecil!" Then the dinner-bell clangs out, and Mr. Harrington, with his straw hat on the back of his head, flings back the gate and greets him.

"Ah, Cecil! back again? How are you and how are the earl and countess?"

And the moment, the golden opportunity for making the confidence—for telling that story of the lake of Lucerne, which should have been told a week ago, slips by!

Leaving the two talking, Carrie runs into the house, and catching Philippa on the stairs, pulls her into her bedroom, and holds up the letter.

"For me! Countess-arms and all!" she says, with an unsteady laugh.

Philippa looks rather awestricken, stricken, and sinks on to the bed, eying the envelope as if it were a basilisk.

Carrie opens it gingerly and takes out the sheet of note-paper, also stamped with the Fitz-Harwood arms, and reads, not without a quiver in her voice, though she smiles bravely still.

"My dear Carrie—For so you must permit me to call you. My son has told me of his good fortune in winning your love, and has given us so glowing an account of you that I am anxious to see with my own eyes the young lady who has won, what you will forgive me for calling his true and honest heart. It will not become me, his mother, to speak much in his praise, but if I should say, my dear child, that if he should prove as good a husband as he has proved a son, you will have insured all the happiness which I most sincerely wish for you. And now will you and your sister, Miss Harrington, whom we are also anxious to know, come and pay us an early visit, that we may make the acquaintance of our future daughter? I will leave the day for you to fix at your convenience, but we shall be glad to see you if you can come next week. Reserving all further welcome until we see you and are able to express it in person.

"Believe me,  
"Yours very truly,  
"Eleanor Fitz-Harwood."

"P. S.—Of course Cecil will accompany you."

Carrie lets the letter drop in her hands, and stares at Philippa, and Philippa stares back again.

"My dear," she says at last, having gained the use of her tongue. "I congratulate you. I read it again, Carrie. Carrie obeys, this times with a heightened color and a suspicious moisture in the dark eyes.

"It is emphatically a beautiful letter—not a word too much or too little. It doesn't gush, and it isn't cold. My dear, I congratulate you."

Carrie laughs softly.

"After all, Philippa, countesses do not seem such terrible personages. I did not expect such a letter, so kind and considerate. Philippa, in our pride do not let us forget that we are only a farmer's daughters. Do not—"

Philippa breaks in suddenly.

"But this visit, Carrie!" she says, with a start. "What is to be done about that?"

Carrie springs her shoulders.

"It is impossible that we can go," she says.

And she glides to the wardrobe and throws open the doors.

"Behold thy servant's raiment! It is scarcely fitting for Fitz-Harwood Castle."

But Philippa purses her lips.

"A great deal can be done in a week. Father will find the money for some new dresses, and—and if I have a little nest-egg put on one side, and you shall have it and go, and I will stay at home."

This is too much for Carrie, whose tears

have only with difficulty been kept back. With a little cry she throws her arms round Philippa's neck, and sobb out:

"Never, never! I will go with you, Philippa, or not at all!"

"Hush, hush, dear," says Philippa, soothingly. "Then we will both go. But don't cry! My dear child, what is there to cry about? And you'll have red eyes, and he'll see it, and wonder what is the matter. Don't cry!"

"Please let me," says Carrie, with a little choking sob. "If you know how how anxious I have been, Philippa! How easily it might have been different—they might have been hard and cold! Why should they want me—me, who am a mere nobody compared with them—me, of whom they know nothing—and whom everybody will say has 'caught' their white swan? Philippa, I trembled when he came in at the gate, for I feared the worst. Then you told me that it is all right, and I know that I may keep him—that they will not take him away from me—my heart feels as if it were too full. Don't speak to me, Philippa—not for five minutes, let me have my cry out—I don't cry often, Philippa, and it doesn't hurt one to cry—for joy, you know."

And Philippa wisely lets her have her way, and sits, patient and tender-hearted, holding the slim figure against her knees.

CHAPTER XVIII.

There are some decent shops at Thorpe Hamstead, and with these and a parcel from one of the first London importers the two girls get together sufficient "finery," as Mr. Harrington calls it, to enable them to start for their visit to Fitz-Harwood on the following week.

Certainly, quite a cover about Carrie's soul, even while she surveys the new dinner-dresses, the walking costume, and the morning robe, which lie in the modest imperial. She still has her doubts, whether, after all, she and Philippa will look like "dowdies" among the great folks of Harwood Castle; but Philippa reassures her with the encouraging reminder that, after all, it will not be their dresses which the earl and countess will criticize, but themselves. "And, so far as you are concerned, my dear," she says, "fate has done so much for you that you can rest easy."

"But you don't understand," says Carrie, with a sigh. "I don't want to appear frumpy, even though I am only a farmer's daughter! I don't care for myself, of course; it is for Cecil's credit. I don't want to hear some grande dame whisper behind my back, 'Is that the girl he is smitten with? Dear me! what ever can he see in her!'"

"My dear, they would be sure to say that if you wore a costume of Worth's and were decked in diamonds!" says Philippa, and this, with a cynicism close to the discussion.

As for Lord Cecil, he takes the matter as coolly and easily as he does all other matters. He has no doubt about his sweetheart's success, not the slightest in the world. Carrie may feel nervous and despondent, but he will have nothing to say to such cowardice.

"My darling!" he says, "my mother doesn't care in the least how a person is dressed; and as to my father, he couldn't tell you the color of a dress, a lady had worn an hour after he had seen her, to save his life."

"But you care—surely you care, Cecil?" she whispers in his ear. "You like me to look prettily, don't you?"

"I'll defy you to look anything else," he had said, and that closed the discussion so far as he was concerned.

So, about a week after the receipt of the invitation, the three started, and for the first time, perhaps, Carrie realized the change that had come over her life.

Hitherto, when she and Philippa had taken a journey by rail, they had travelled in second-class, unattended, with scant ceremony and a good deal of trouble and inconvenience.

Now there was not only Lord Cecil as cavalier servant, but Yates, the silent and chiseled, who attended to her like a shadow, looked after the luggage, and eluding the imperial containing the precious dresses, who took the tickets, chose a first-class carriage, and got it labelled "engaged," and who treated them, generally, as if they were infants and imbeciles—as Philippa remarked—incapable of doing anything for themselves, and for whose comfort and safety he was specially responsible.

"I shall not be surprised if he appears, half way, and offers us refreshment out of a baby's bottle," she says. And Lord Cecil laughs, and says coolly:

"Yates is a good fellow, and a capital courier. If we all went to sleep, and did not wake till we found ourselves at the Castle, he would have brought us through quite safely and comfortably."

It is a delightful journey. Yates and Philippa have packed a little basket full of dainties, and Yates appears at the carriage door at midday with it, and arranges it in the shape of a luncheon on one side of the carriage—does it all with an apologetic air, as if he were quite ashamed that he had not brought a dining-room table and half a dozen chairs, and would gladly wait upon them, but that Lord Cecil dismisses him, and does footman's service himself.

Surely never luncheon taken within four walls was so much enjoyed, or so provocative of laughter! They are going at express speed now, and the pigeon-pie lurches first to the right, and then to the left, knocking over the pepper-castor and the salt, and only saved at the critical moment from falling to the floor by the united efforts of the trio. Then, as there is not a plethora of knives and forks, wonders of management have to be performed to make them serve for pie, mustard, cheese and butter. And there are, of course, only two glasses, which necessitates Cecil and Carrie drinking out of the same. When one is young and well and happy it does not let us forget that we are only a farmer's daughters. It is a joyous party in this first-class carriage of the London & South-western Railway.

So joyous that Carrie forgets her ailments about her dresses, forgets the ordeal which awaits her in the meeting of the grand folks, and when the train puffs into the junction at which they are to alight, she is startled and confused at the rapidity of their journey.

"Yes," says Lord Cecil; "we have only half an hour's drive, and we shall be home."

It is a gracious speech, and encourages Carrie, though her heart sinks a little as the footman, tall and superb, comes to the door, and she sees, waiting outside the station, a big chariot with a coachman in a wig and a footman to match his fellow.

It is not only the handsome carriage, or the imposing liveries of the servants

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# MANY LINES OF NEW SPRING GOODS

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Sharp at 8.30 to-morrow morning we swing our doors open to positively one of the best Sale Events of the whole season. Every line selected with our usual care from our grand spring stock, and in connection with these Special Sale Events, as a double attraction, we will parade all the very latest effects in women's chic wearing apparel, many of which will be displayed for the first time. COME.



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25 manufacturer's Sample Suits. No two alike. Made of chiffon, Panama in plain and fancy stripe, new hipless and semi-fitting model, single-breasted coat, 29 to 34 inches long, lined throughout with a good satin lining; Skirts eleven and thirteen gored, nicely strapped and trimmed. A splendid assortment of colors and sizes. Regular value \$25.00, while they last on Saturday \$17.50

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Made of high grade chiffon Panama, tailored in the new semi-fitting and hipless models, a good assortment of colors to select from; coats are nicely tailored and trimmed; skirts newest models; value \$15.50, very special at \$12.50

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A splendid assortment of colors, light and dark shades, beautifully tailored; coats, many nicely trimmed, others strictly tailored; skirts gored and pleated models; these suits are worth from \$15 to \$18.00, sale price on Saturday \$10.98

**Women's Skirts \$2.98**  
Navy, brown, green, black and fancy materials, good assortment of styles and sizes, regular \$5.00, on sale Saturday \$2.98

**Tailor-made Coats \$5.00**  
In colored and black chiffon broad-cloth, box and semi-fitting styles, nicely tailored coats, regular \$6.50, specially priced at \$5.00

### Women's Dainty Spring Hats Very Special for Saturday

For to-morrow we place on sale 25 dainty Spring Hats in assorted colors, copies of our beautiful French models, made of fancy straw and trimmed with ribbons, flowers, etc. Exquisite new Spring Hats on sale at popular prices. Come and see them. Priced \$5 and \$6.

**Special to the Home Milliner**

Our stock is now complete with exclusive designs of handsome French flowers, foliage, ribbons, etc., etc. Make your selections early. Popular prices reign supreme.

### Striking Bargains in Blouses Saturday

THIRD FLOOR

**Print Waists for 49c**  
Navy Blue and White and Black and White Polka Dot Waists, made with back and front nicely tucked, in all sizes, worth regular 98c, Saturday for 49c

**\$2.50 Waists for \$1.49**  
Made up in both fancy and tailored styles. The fancy Waists are made with Swiss allover embroidery front, directorio collar and tucked sleeves, pointed cuff, edged with lace, baby back, worth regular \$2.50, Saturday's sale price \$1.49

**\$2.50 Moirette Underskirts \$1.49**  
These Skirts are made of a superior quality, deep acordoné pleated flounce, in grey, brown and black, finished with fall, worth regular \$2.50, Saturday's sale price \$1.49

### Second Day of the Great Clearing Sale of Wash Goods

**FINE WHITE SHADOW PERSIAN LAUNDS**, in a large variety of patterns, dots and figures, fine, sheer quality, very pretty for lingerie blouses, regularly 25c a yard, to clear at 10c

**WHITE MADRAS SHIRT WAISTING**, in very stylish design, the newest for shirt waists, firm quality, mercerized finish, new import goods, regularly 25c, Saturday 18c

**MOTOR CLOTH SUITING**, fancy twill and stripe effects, in all fashionable shades of blue, tan, mauve and green, also two-tone effects, good weight material, 36-inch, very stylish for coat and skirt suits, also for small boys, very special 22c

**PLAID ZEPHYR GINGHAMS**, in pale blue, pink, red, greens, tans, also charming effects in mixed colorings, smooth, silky finish, fine, hard thread, extra width, worth 35c yard, for 25c

# R. MCKAY & CO.

that impress her, but the manner and tone of the latter.

If they all three had been a duke and duchess of high degree, these gorgeous giants could not be more deferential and respectful. The footman who has come to the train guards Carrie's and Philippa's dresses. From the carriage door, as if they would be polluted by coming in contact with it, the porters who crowd forward respectfully, are waved aside as if too common a clay to be permitted to approach; the station-master, who stands back in hand, is so to speak, awed back by the attendant giants, and as Philippa says afterward, their progress to the chariot was like a march of triumph.

But Carrie, to whom all this makes such an impression, glances at Lord Cecil's face, and sees that it makes no impression upon him; he takes it quite coolly, as indeed is natural, seeing that the homage and attention are matters of common use to him.

The footman shuts the door, and then joins his fellow behind the carriage, and they start.

Lord Cecil feels a timid hand steel out toward him, and he takes it in his and presses it lovingly.

"We shall soon be home, my darling!" he murmurs.

She glances at him with a little quivering smile and sinks back into her corner—into the satin-lined cushions that yield so softly to her pressure, and keeps her eyes fixed on the window.

As she does she sees that the signs of respect which attended them at the station are extended along the road. Every man they met doffs his hat to the ground chariot, every woman and child drops a courtesy. They pass a village inn, and she sees that it bears on its swinging sign-board the Fitz-Harwood arms.

Every now and again, as they pass the railings of a vast park on their left, they come upon a pair of massive and upon quaintly ornamental lodges, from which women and children emerge to courtesy and bow.

### Extra Specials from Our Great Dress Goods Department.

Another Rousing Saturday Sale of Broadcloth and Directoire Satin Suitings, Every Yard Worth Regular \$1.00, Saturday Sale Price 75c Yd.

Again to-morrow we place on sale another special shipment of these popular materials at a splendid saving, in both plain and shadow stripe effects. This is an opportunity for those who intend buying their new Spring suit length in the near future that should not be missed, for those decidedly wanted materials are very scarce. On sale in elephant, taupe, wistaria, old rose, brown, navy, myrtle and black, at per yard 75c.

**Regular 50c French Delaines for 35c Yard**  
On sale to-morrow a smart collection of new French Delaines, guaranteed pure wool and in the lot you will find some real nifty patterns, in light, mid and dark grounds; splendid material for ladies' lounge dresses and children's wear, at, per yard 35c.

**Regular 75c Pure Wool Serges for 39c Yard**  
Here's another chance to buy Children's Dress Lengths or serviceable, good wearing Women's Skirts or Suits; has a hard, crisp finish, 44 inches wide and guaranteed pure wool, on sale in navy, brown, myrtle, red, cream and black, at, per yard, Saturday only 39c.

### Big Purchase of Black Taffeta Silk

Regularly 75c Yard, on Sale To-morrow 39c

This is the best offer ever made by us, and the quality will surprise every purchaser; a French Black Taffeta, suitable for any use, beautifully finished and good value at 75c, sale price to-morrow 39c

**1,000 Yards White and Cream Wash Silk 29c**

This Silk is without any doubt one of the best of all washing Silks, natural Habutai, in white and ivory shades, strong and durable, full 27 inches wide; see this to-morrow 29c

### 4 Big Specials from the Jewelry Section

Here's a great Saturday special selling event from our grand Jewelry Section that will create immense selling. Would advise early morning shopping.

**Woman's Pearl Cuff Links at Half Price**  
Sharp at 8.30 to-morrow morning we place on sale 10 dozen Women Pearl Cuff Links, guaranteed qualities; worth regular 50c, sale price to-morrow 25c set

**Beauty Pins 15c Pair, Reg. 25c**  
A manufacturer's lot of Gold Plated Beauty Pins to clear to-morrow at 15c pair, worth regular 25c.

**Oriental Hats Pins Worth 35c, Sat. Sale Price 15c**  
5 dozen pretty and fetching Oriental Hat Pins will be cleared to-morrow at the above sale price. See them.

**Very Latest in Jet Hat Pins**  
Just passed into stock a small lot of Paris Jet Hat Pins, and will be shown to-morrow for the first time, at 15c up to 50c each.

### Bargains for the Baby

**Children's Dresses for 49c**  
We will put on sale Saturday morning 5 dozen only of Children's White Lawn Dresses, made with tucked yoke, embroidery over shoulder, collar and sleeves edged with embroidery, in sizes 1 to 4, worth regularly 98c, Saturday for 49c

**75c Bonnets 39c**  
Children's Fancy Silk Embroidered Bonnets, made with lace ruch and silk ties, worth regular 75c, to clear Saturday for 39c

### Extraordinary Bargains During This Sale of Carpets—All Carpets Made, Laid and Lined Free

**Velvet Carpets \$1.15**  
Clearing line quality Velvet Carpets, great value, made, laid and lined, for \$1.15

**Wilton Carpets \$1.45**  
Clearing line Wilton Carpet, fine quality, rich colorings, made, laid and lined, for \$1.45

**Brussels Carpets 87 1/2c**  
Clearing line Brussels Carpets, heavy quality, reversible colorings, made, laid and lined for 87 1/2c

**Tapestry Carpets 69c**  
Clearing line Tapestry Carpets, with or without borders, extra value, made, laid and lined for 69c

**Velvet Rugs \$19.00**  
Velvet Room Rugs, best quality, seamless, size 3 1/2 x 3 yards, special price \$19.00

**Tapestry Rugs \$9.50**  
Tapestry Room Rugs, size 4 1/2 yards, choice patterns, heavy quality, special price \$9.50

**Brussels Rugs \$17.50**  
Brussels Rugs, size 3 1/2 x 3 yards, extra heavy quality, elegant patterns, special price \$17.50

**Wilton Rugs \$30.00**  
High grade quality Wilton Rugs, size 3 1/2 x 3 yards, rich colorings, special price \$30.00

### A PLAY THAT FRIGHTENED ENGLAND.

How England, which remained deaf for years to the warnings of her military experts that she should create a national army, has been frightened into recognition of her military defencelessness by a crude melodrama, is told by Sydney Brooks, writing from London, in the issue of Harper's Weekly for March 20th. "An Englishman's Home" the play which has aroused the country, describes the fate of one Mr. Brown, a typical middle-class Englishman, and of his family, the "flannelled fools" of Kipling, devoted to "sport" and sneering at the possibility of invasion. Under cover of a fog a hostile army lands, and Mr. Brown's house is occupied. The helplessness of the volunteers who come to the defence is shown. Finally Mr. Brown, in desperation, seizes a rifle, discovers its use, and fires into the ranks of the enemy. He is captured and brought before Prince Yoland, the leader of the invading army. As a civilian who offered re-

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assistance he is entitled to no consideration. "Take him out and shoot him," says Prince Yoland—and Mr. Brown is led to his execution. "What great soldiers and statesmen and orators have failed to do this play has succeeded in doing," says Sydney Brooks. "It has opened the eyes of the ordinary indifferent citizen. It has pointed for him the degradation that fatally awaits both the nation given up to 'sport' and the individual who has not started the elementary duty of learning how to defend his country."