

A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Dartford. Then he turned to Heroncourt quickly. "By the way that reminds me, I've got tidings of that quaint old fellow, David Jones. A man rode in this afternoon, a man I'd engaged at Melbourne; he saw David Jones there—fancy, Melbourne! They knew each other and David Jones sent you a message by him. He was to give you his duty and to say that those two young ladies—the Miss Carringtons, you know—have sailed for England and that David Jones is going too. He's gone by this time, of course; the man said he was just starting. I'll go and look him up and send him in to you."

Ricky stared at Heroncourt who sat with bowed head and knitted brow. "To England!" gasped Ricky. "And to think that I have come out here. Oh, it's too bad!"

Heroncourt raised his head; he looked very pale and haggard. "You must go after them, Ricky," he said.

"But—" began Ricky, with a confused air: he was half-bewildered by this series of surprises.

"You must go after them," said Heroncourt, again. "They may need you. You can start to-morrow as you proposed. If you want money—"

"I've enough for that," said Ricky, a little more cheerfully. Then suddenly he said: "Why shouldn't you come too?"

The color rose to Heroncourt's face and died away again. Why should he go to torture himself with the sight of the woman he had lost? Besides, there was Lucy.

"It is impossible," he said. "I cannot go. Don't ask me."

He held up his hand almost sternly, for Ricky had opened his lips to eagerly argue the question; but Heroncourt began to give directions for the journey.

They sat and talked for some time, then Ricky went out to fetch some English newspapers which he had brought in his saddle-bag. He was coming from the stable when the pretty, pale-faced girl he had seen laying the cloth, came towards him. She wore a hat and jacket and held a small bundle in her hand, as if she were starting on a journey, and Ricky, raising his hat, was passing her when she stretched out her hand, as if to stay him, and said:

"May I—may I speak to you, sir?" Ricky stopped and raised his hat again in well-bred English fashion.

"Certainly," he said. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

Her hand went to her bosom as if to still the throbbing of her heart and she stood still for a moment silently fighting her emotion; then she said:

"Yes, sir, there is. I want to ask you a few questions; I want you, I

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beg of you, to answer them. I can't tell you why I ask them; but it's not from curiosity—oh, no! It's because so much depends upon my doing the right thing; it's for his sake, that I want to know—"

"His?" said Ricky, puzzled. "Yes; Mr. Tudor's," she went on in a low voice, and more calmly.

"When you rode up just now you called him 'Lord Heroncourt'; is that his right name? Is he a lord—a gentleman? You need not hesitate, sir, the secret is safe with me; I shall never tell anyone. I've reasons, good reasons, for asking; believe me, I'm speaking the truth when I say that I am only thinking of his happiness and of what is good for him."

Ricky looked anxiously at the beautiful, care-worn face, the innocent, truthful eyes which met his steadily; and, so looking at her, decided to answer her.

"Yes," he said; "my friend is Lord Heroncourt; he is the Earl of Heroncourt, a great English nobleman." She bowed her head for a moment and murmured, more to herself than to him:

"I might have known; oh, yes, I might have known!"

"Thank you, sir. Will you tell me why he left England; was it because of some trouble—mostly it is when a great gentleman leaves the old country and comes out to this wild place. But was it because—because of a love trouble? You needn't hesitate, sir. I am asking for his sake."

"Well, yes, it was," said Ricky, reluctantly. "He was going to be married to a young lady, one of the most beautiful, most lovable women God ever made. I know her—and her sister. Then there was some trouble, and they were parted."

Lucy's head was bowed lower; then she raised it and looked at him with a dumb agony in her eyes, her face white as death; but yet glowing with a woman's courage, a woman's sacrifice of self.

"Was her name—Maida?" she asked.

The name was scarcely breathed, as if it cost her an agony to pronounce it.

"That was her name," said Ricky, gravely. "But I'm sorry that you have asked me, that I have told you all this. I really ought not to have done so, but—"

"You have done no harm, sir," she said, almost inaudibly. "You may have done great good. I am leaving this place—I shall not ever see Mr. Tudor again. I meant to say good-bye, but I cannot—I mean, there is not time. Will you give him this, sir? Not now, not directly you go in, but in an hour's time? I can trust you, sir?"

She held out an envelope, and Ricky saw that her hand was shaking. He took the letter and raised his hat.

"I will," he said. "I am afraid you are in trouble—can I help you—can I do anything?"

She seemed scarcely to hear him. Heroncourt was passing at a little distance, and her eyes, her whole being, seemed to turn towards him as if she were under a spell. As his footsteps died away, she recovered, and her eyes slowly came back to Ricky's face.

"Help me!" she echoed, so helplessly, so despairingly, that it made Ricky's heart ache. "No one can help me but God. You will give him the letter, sir? Thank you, thank you."

As she spoke a man came up.

"Are you ready, Miss Lucy?" he said. "I was told you weren't going to start for a couple of hours or I'd have been ready sooner. Women are kind cattle surely; they never know their minds two minutes together. How long will you be now, the horses and cart is waiting?"

Lucy's lips formed "good-bye"; she turned to look at the house, looked in the direction whence Heroncourt had gone, then, with bent head, followed the man.

Ricky, with sore misgivings over his breach of confidence, went into the house; but Heroncourt was not there and did not come in for some time; and when he did come in looked worn and haggard and tired.

"Here are the papers," said Ricky. "You'll like to have news of old England; but, oh, Heroncourt, how I wish you were going over with me."

Heroncourt shook his head. Outside he had been pacing up and down for the last hour wrestling with the temptation to follow Maida, if only to see her for the last time. But if there were no other obstacles in the way, there was Lucy, the girl to whom he had pledged his troth; and though it was done in a moment of great mental stress and strain, when his mind had scarcely recovered its equilibrium, he was pledged to her and he must keep his pledged troth. Yes, he belonged to Lucy, to the girl who had saved his life, who he knew, loved him.

"It's impossible," he said. "Say no more about it. I want to give you a message for Lady Glassbury. Tell her that I have settled here; that I am quite happy, that I shall never return to England."

"And when I see Maida?" said Ricky, in a low voice.

"Tell her—nothing," replied Heroncourt, sternly. "I've no message for her. You'd better get to bed now, Ricky; you'll have to get up early to-morrow."

Ricky rose; then he remembered the letter; he had almost forgotten it, he was so engrossed in Maida and Carrie.

"Oh, this letter!" he said; "it was given to me by that pretty girl who was laying the cloth—" Heroncourt took the letter, tore open the envelope listlessly, and read the simple, pathetic words Lucy had written with a rusty pen and faded ink; but they were written with her heart's blood:

"I am going away. I shall never see you any more. It was all a mistake, your asking me to marry you and my saying 'Yes.' I know that I am not fit to do so. But that's not the reason. I said 'Yes' because you were

ill and I was flurried, but now I know that I was wrong. I shouldn't be happy as your wife. I don't love you in that way. I hope you will be happy, and that you will go to England and be happy. I shall always think of you and your goodness to me. Don't send after me, because I've quite made up my mind; I'm quite sure I couldn't be your wife, not loving you enough.

"LUCY."

Heroncourt sank into a chair and sat with bowed head, the letter crushed in his hand. He did not love the girl, but yet—The heart of man is full of inconsistencies. Though her desertion of him broke the chain that bound him to her and released him from his promise, he felt as if crushed down by a new sense of desolation.

Ricky regarded him anxiously.

"What's the matter, Heroncourt?" he asked. "Is it bad news? She seemed awfully cut up when she gave it to me; she asked me about you—"

"She has not gone," he said almost to himself. "I will find her."

"She went an hour ago," said Ricky. "Heroncourt, I don't know what it all means, of course; but I can see that you are unhappy—that things have gone wrong with you here. You ought not to bury yourself here—you, the Earl of Heroncourt. Once more, won't you come back with me?"

Heroncourt gripped the table and stood erect, his teeth set and his face working.

"Yes," he said, hoarsely. "I've been fighting against it, but all in vain; and this"—he held out his hand with Lucy's letter crushed in it—"this decides me. I will go with you."

Dartford entered at the moment, and Heroncourt swung round upon him.

"Dartford, I must go to England. You'll think me mad. I can't help it. I must go. I shall be of no use if I remain here. I'll come back—but I must go."

Dartford went to him and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"That's all right, old man," he said. "I can see there's something been worrying you lately; but I've held my tongue; don't like to interfere in another man's business, you know. But of course you shall go; go with your friend, Mr. Clark, here. Steady, old man, steady!" Heroncourt had sunk into the chair and his head had fallen forward on his arms, outstretched on the table. "Come on, I'll help you to pack!"

(To Be Continued.)

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To-Day's Message 10.00 A.M.

A THORN REMOVED.

ROME, Italy. Monte Santo, the side of which has been scarred by many struggles in the last two years and which has seen the armies of the spot where the Second Army Corps, commanded by General Capullo, who captured the base of Monte Santo, was driving off the Austrians from the mountain, which for so long has been a thorn in the side of the Italian army.

FIRST MEETING OF RUSSIAN STATE COUNCIL.

MOSCOW, Russia. The State Council, which has been an important result to the National Assembly of Russia, opened at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in the Grand Opera House with that solemnity and pomp characteristic of Moscow. After a one day strike protest by the Bolsheviks in protest against the Council as a counter-revolutionary expression, the city is quiet. Attempts by the Bolsheviks to meet in street to organize demonstrations were similarly suppressed by the police. No serious incidents occurred; precautions were taken to prevent disorders of all descriptions. The Council's threats show a respect for unknown even in revolutionary days. The building of the Council is meeting in a square by a chain of soldiers with bayonets fixed to their rifles. The pickets are from regiments of the Corps or Cadets training for the Chambers under the direction of the Chief of the Russian Army. Other members of the Council are before being admitted have their papers examined by nine different military posts. Premier Kerensky and other members of the Provisional Government occupied the seats reserved for them. They were preceded by General Brusilov, former Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, and military officers in the Emperor's Guard. There was much comment on the presence of General Kornilov, Chief of the Army, but it is expected he will attend the Council. The proceedings began with a prayer by Premier Kerensky lasting a few minutes and a half, pronounced in a resolute voice which drew the attention of the audience. The Premier's magnificent appearance and energetic and energetic organizations and members of the Cabinet, but Duma members participated. He spoke for five minutes, emphasizing the part played by the military and his determination to play in events in the future. Premier was greeted with a warm applause when he spoke of the part of the theatre occupied by cratic organizations and members of the Cabinet, but Duma members participated. He spoke for five minutes, emphasizing the part played by the military and his determination to play in events in the future.

er you feel within you a responsible sacred duty for the present here in Moscow. The strength which is necessary for prosperity to the country give the world and its sure of decadence? A little indignantly replied to a proposal to conclude a suspended attempt equally base directed our Allies. The latter was with equal indignation and name of the great Russian say to our Allies that we must reply we expected of them. The point the delegates are to be the diplomatic representatives of Allied Powers. The Premier tributes to the Roumans, that if they were forced to abandon their course, they find hospitality in Russia. Standing the none too friendly attitude toward the motion of certain nationalities of the state, the Premier concluded, democracy would give them promised through the Pro