

"I hope I shall be a very loving woman, but I do wish to be a very clever independent woman too. Now Uncle Bertrand, don't look at me in such a disappointed tone of voice!" laughed Gypsy.

"I know you love me" she said lightly, "but I want you to be proud of me as well."

"That is a dangerous thing for a woman to indulge in too much."

"You darling!" said Gypsy, making a little moue at him. "The wish is there, nevertheless. It is all your fault; when I see how wise you are how can I help longing to be a little bit like you. You are the *goodest, cleverest* man I ever saw."

"You have seen very few men" answered Bertrand gravely; suffering a keen pang as he spoke. Suddenly a wish rose in his mind that he had told Gypsy long ago that he was not her own uncle.

"I don't believe there is another man like you in the world, Uncle Bertrand. I am quite sure no other Uncle in the world is so good to his niece. You have always been so gentle and tender to me, that if anyone even speaks quickly to me it hurts me now. You have spoilt me, I am afraid, darling." Gypsy said this with a calm assurance that was irresistible.

Bertrand longed to take the little creature in his arms as he had so often done when she was a child. She was indeed the light of his eyes, and she was the greatest anxiety he had in life.

"But, Uncle Bertrand, you are not so fond of me as you used to be. You have not given me a kiss for a long time. Now, give me one of your dear, sweet, old, long kisses."

It was true. He had not kissed her since that day she sprained her ankle; and he had learned he loved her no longer as a child. Very hard had been the penance, but religiously he had kept it.

Gypsy twined her arms round him and put her lips up to his in the most bewitching way in the world. He was only human. As she put her lips to his, a thrill of pleasure passed through him. All the love he had been struggling to crush out in him rose then. Passionately he held her in his arms, his lips clinging to hers. He could hardly put her from him. He kissed her hair, eyes and lips with kisses of despairing love. The very essence of sweetness she seemed to him. At last, her smile of innocent pleasure first woke him from his temporary delirium. He put her from him sick at heart.

"Ah!" she said with a smile of pleasure that was very delicious. You are a darling, and you do love your little wicked Gypsy a wee bit. Don't go away from me Uncle Bertrand."

But without a word he left the room—left it with the firm resolve that she must know now that she was not his niece as she believed; that they were not relations. He knew what that meant. All the sweet familiar intercourse would perhaps cease utterly. Perhaps she would even learn at last to look upon him almost as a stranger. He felt she would never again kiss him with the same freedom; but he felt that it must be so, after all he had learnt that day of his feelings. It was hard but it must be done. He must tell her everything. Then bitterly he asked himself why this hot, strong love had been given to him in his old age? If he could only tear it from his heart he would do it though he died in the act. He would go away and struggle with it. Perhaps if he was away from her—then—but how could he leave her when she was so dependent on him? Thank God for that; she owed him everything, though she knew it not, and would never know it. No, he must learn to suffer and be still; and then he prayed she might never suffer one throb of pain.

With all a lover's quick imagination, he thought of her soft dark hair, her brown eyes, all her sweetness; all her winning ways rose before him; in the greatness of his despairing love, she seemed to him more lovely than ever. To him she was the embodiment of all that was perfect and lovely. No, it never occurred to him that another man might see flaws in his jewel. That what to him was very winning, another man might call wilful. No, he saw nothing but truth and fearlessness in that character. That night, when quite alone, he asked himself one question again and again. At last, with a low groan of despair in his agony, he cried aloud—"I have sinned in thought; I have sinned against her; I have betrayed the trust of a friend. It was that touch of her sweet pure lips that first told me all; a kiss given in all childish innocence, and yet it aroused, it showed a fire blazing within me. God on high!" he entreated, "strangle this selfish love in its very birth. O friend of my youth, I swear, never, never shall pass these lips one word which might not have been uttered by a father—by her own father. You gave her to me; God help me, she is safe from any selfish wish of mine even to make her mine. She is safe. She is safe. Yes, safe as if she were indeed flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone. She is my daughter—nay spiritual daughter. She is but a child to me in age. Oh, mad fool that I have been! When did this love first take root? Fool! fool! that I have been!"

Bertrand never found any excuse for his love. Solemnly he had vowed that no word of his love should ever pass his lips, and faithfully he kept that vow.

CHAPTER V.

The following day Bertrand was away all day on business. The moment he entered the house he found himself looking about anxiously for a bright face, that always shone brightly on him. He felt as if he had been out in the cold all day and was now longing for a bright ray to warm him. How he was longing for his little Gypsy! What was all the world to him now without his little Gypsy? The more he tried to persuade himself that this love was only what he would have it to be—yea, so much the more he found out the intensity of that love.

(To be Continued.)

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AND
Mary Austen, Mary Haven, Robert
Thackston, and Frank G. Forbes,
Defendants.

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by the Sheriff of the County of Halifax, or his
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o'clock, noon, pursuant to an order of foreclosure
and sale made herein on the 11th day of December,
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amount due for principal, interest, and costs, be
paid to the plaintiffs, their solicitor, or into
Court.

All the estate, right, title, interest, and equity of
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Forman's property, thence westerly by Forman's
northern line twenty-four feet five inches, more or
less, to the south-eastern angle of property recently
conveyed by the executors of the late William
Hauld, deceased, to Elizabeth Hauld, thence northerly
on the east line of the property so conveyed to
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and appurtenances to the same, belonging or
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Halifax, N. S., 23rd May, 1889.

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