

# Maida's Secret.....

By the Author of....  
"A Gipsy's Daughter,"  
"Another Nan's Wife,"  
"A Heart's Bitterness,"  
Etc., Etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—Maida Carrington, the illegitimate child of Sir Richard Hartleigh, meets her half-sister Constance on a stage-coach in America. The stage is attacked and Constance is wounded. Maida leaves her for dead and goes to impersonate her in England. Caryl Wilton, who knew Maida as a zealous actress, meets her at some amateur theatricals in her new home.

## CHAPTER XVI.

In the meantime what was he doing who was the cause of all the agony which rent the soul of the erring woman?

He watched the carriage as it drove out of the grounds, and then with a set purpose took his way after it. It did not matter to him how far the Hall was away. It suited him for the moment to follow the woman he loved.

He strode after the carriage careless that it outstripped him. He knew the way to the Hall and he was going there. And when he reached there he entered the grounds and looked up at the windows that were lighted. And when he discovered, by the shadow on the curtains, which room was Maida's he threw himself on a bench and watched it.

"Yes," he said to himself "up there in the room of Constance Hartleigh, is Maida Carrington. By what right is she there? Is she Constance Hartleigh? She may be, but she fears me for the knowledge I have that she is Maida Carrington, and that she once acted on the stage.

"To think that I should have hunted for her hither and thither, and given up the search, only to find her at the last by a mere piece of luck. Luck! No, it was not luck. Luck to have that particular invitation of a hundred brought to me? No, it was fate if you will, but luck—never.

"But how comes she to be here? How comes she to be Constance Hartleigh? And that she is a Hartleigh, who shall deny after seeing her and her father? If by chance there be something in her life to conceal, does the old man share the secret? And if he does not, what will she do to keep it from him?"

"Why, Caryl Wilton, you talk like a scoundrel. You talk as if you would persecute a woman. Persecute her? Ay, and persecute again! And she shall love me and be happy in my love! Oh, I know I am as mad with this love as ever Romeo, and I have fought the fight against it and been conquered. I will never try again. I will do anything to make her mine, and to make her love me.

"And then, after all, if she will not love me? Well, then which Heaven forbid, I will let her be happy in the love of the best man she can find; and if my death would help her to greater happiness, then I would die, and willingly. But first she shall have no chance of doubt if she can love me, for I will have it so if such a thing be possible. And if she suffers in the doing what of it? Will not the end compensate?"

Whatever his dreams, or whatever his rest that night, no one would have supposed the next morning that anything unusual in his life had taken place, for he entered the breakfast room with his easy, imperturbable nonchalance, and made his apologies to the Duchess for his desertion from the ball the previous night.

And she forgave him, because there was nothing else to do, as everybody did for him very nearly as he wished.

"Where is Algy?" he asked, looking round the table.

"Sick abed, where he will be now for a week recovering from the strain of his success." "Poor Algy! I will go see him after breakfast."

And he did. Lord Algy was lying in bed in a darkened room, but he was glad to see Caryl, who had over him something of the soothing influence of the mesmerist; though, if he had any of that power, he never exercised it, and the effect was rather a moral than a physical one.

"I am glad to see you, old fellow. Good of you to come up here out of the sunshine."

"Sorry to see you in bed, Algy; but if you will dabble in theatricals, why, you must suffer."

"But what a success, Caryl. And did you ever, now, on your honor, see such a Juliet before?"

"She certainly did well for an amateur."

"Do you mean you do not really think it was good acting?"

"Oh, it was wonderful when you consider it was her first attempt. It was her first attempt, was it not?"

suspected by Sir Richard, and fled from her home—I think it was twenty years ago. He afterwards discovered that she was innocent, and sought for her, but only succeeded in finding the daughter, who was an infant at the time of the mother's flight."

"Why was not the mother found?" "She was dead."

"Ah! When did she die?" "How should I know? It is not the kind of a question you would care to ask Sir Richard, and he has not volunteered the information. Whose business is it?"

"By which you mean it is none of mine. Well, I don't suppose it is. She is a pretty girl, is she not?"

"Pretty?" cried Lord Algy, with scornful emphasis; "she is beautiful. I never saw her equal. It is not mere beauty of feature either. You can see the beauty of her character shining out of those glorious eyes."

"Rather enamoured, aren't you, Algy?"

"I would not care for more than her friendship and the chance to serve her. Besides, there is another."

The dark eyebrows went up, and there was a strange glint in the dark eyes.

"Another, did you say? And who is the lucky dog?"

"Her cousin Guy."

"Oh, she loves him, eh? Well, he is a fine-looking fellow. Of course he reciprocates?"

"He worships her. Who that knows her does not? Always excepting you."

"Oh, you must always leave me out of the question."

And with this he went off to prepare for a walk to the Hall. And a half hour later he was striding along leisurely, swinging his cane easily, and soliloquizing:

"It is just as well to go at once," he said to himself; "for if she really is in love with this Hercules, or even if she is not, but only intends to marry him, she may as well know that I am in earnest, and have not forgotten the day I offered her my heart. Yes, she may as well know that Caryl Wilton has forgotten nothing."

It was in a strange frame of mind that he walked up to the great door of the Hall and knocked for admittance. He was prepared for a struggle, but no one looking at his careless grace of demeanor, would have guessed it.

## CHAPTER XVII.

The great doors of the Hall were wide open, as if Sir Richard were desirous of keeping up the ancient and hospitable ways of his ancestors, who maintained open house to all comers. After knocking, Caryl stepped into the wide hall, and there waited until a servant in livery came and took his card.

"Sir Richard," said Caryl, and stepped into the drawing-room, the doors of which stood open.

Presently he heard a door open—his ears as well as his eyes were as quick as a North American Indian's—and, turning, saw a figure coming with a quick, graceful step toward him. It was Maida.

A sudden thrill of surprise and admiration ran through him.

"Good-morning," she said, holding out her hand. The man told me you were here, or I am not sure I should have recognized you without your paint and doublet."

There was no start, no embarrassment, no trace of anything but a sweet, natural, womanly candor. Her acting, if acting it were, was perfect.

He took her hand and bowed over it, speechless for a moment before this vision of pure womanhood. It was not the Maida Carrington he had dreamed of, but his heart left no doubt that in this as in any other guise he must equally be the slave of her personality.

"I am the bearer of countless messages of gratitude and anxious enquiry, Miss Hartleigh," he said. "I need not ask if you are well," and he glanced significantly at her peach-like face.

She blushed at the implied compliment, and laughed softly and musically.

"They are very kind," she answered. "Yes, I am well, and not at all tired. And you?"

His dark eyes lighted up with an unmistakable meaning as he answered:

"Had I been ill last night's experience would have cured me. One cannot play Romeo to your Juliet without experiencing a quickening of his life-blood. My pulses still beat faster." Then, with a sudden change of expression, "Lord Algy does not get off as well. I left him in bed, sick with one of his headaches. Excitement and exertion."

A warm light softened the dark eyes.

"I am very sorry," she said simply. "I was afraid it would be so."

There was a moment of awkward silence, his eyes resting on her face. Then she looked up.

"Did you see Guy—my cousin—on the lawn, as you came up the walk?"

"No; I have seen no one but you." There was a double meaning in his words, but she would not seem to see it, and went on, naturally:

"He is about the grounds"—looking out of the window—"and is sure to come in presently. I will go in search of papa," and with a slight inclination of the head, she glided away from him.

Caryl Wilton sank into a chair and looked after her, with a singular smile curving his lips. What a wonderful woman. Not a sign of embarrassment, not a tremor of the eyelids, not a quiver of the red lips. But for the throbbing heart within his breast he must have been deceived.

He heard footsteps again, and presently she entered, with Sir Richard on her arm.

Caryl Wilton had seen him years ago, when he was a mere boy, and he remembered him a tall, upright, iron-visaged man, with stern eyes and mouth. He could scarcely reconcile the bent, gentle, sinking old man with the figure of his memory.

"Mr. Wilton? Yes, yes," said Sir Richard, extending his thin, white hand. "Glad to see you. Very kind of you to remember us, I'm sure. Not overcome by the exertion of last night? You did well, Mr. Wilton. It was the universal verdict that it had never been so well done. How are their graces? Sorry to hear Algy is not well. You are an old friend of his, are you not?"

"Very; but I have not seen much of him for some years, because I have not been in England."

"Ah, travelling," said Sir Richard, nodding assably, his hand toying carelessly with Maida's white sleeve, his eyes wandering to her face with that strange look of anxious, craving affection. "And where have you been?"

"In many places," answered Caryl leaning forward so that his own face was in the shade, while the beautiful face of the young girl was in the full sunlight. If she noticed the manoeuvre it was only to defy his purpose by bringing her face more squarely into the light. "The place I last visited was America."

"Ah, yes, quite new ground," said Sir Richard. "In my day we did not go so far. You visited New York and Boston, I suppose?"

Maida seemed to feel the answer before it was made, for a slight shiver ran over her, but her eyes never lost their smiling look of interest.

"Yes," said Caryl, softly. "New York and Boston. But the last city I made an extended stop at was San Francisco."

He looked at Maida and she smiled back without a tremor. Then, with a perfectly natural movement, she let her arm slip out of her father's and went over to a table on which were some flowers, several of which were in danger of falling out of the dish. She had her back to them as she arranged these, and Sir Richard went on:

"Yes, yes; and I suppose you are not sorry to be back in old England again, eh? And I am safe to say old England is glad to have you back."

Caryl bowed and answered with a smile:

"You are very kind, Sir Richard. I can only answer for myself. England holds to-day all that is dearest in the world to me."

"I am glad to hear you say it, sir. We cannot afford to have such men as you from us long. I shall never forget the treat you gave us last night. And my daughter!"—he looked around, and Maida glided to his side, put her hand on his shoulder, and stood with eyes veiled by their white lids—"my daughter is indebted to you for your masterly performance. It made hers what it was."

"Pardon me if I presume to differ," retorted Caryl. "Anything I did was only possible with the inspiration drawn from your daughter's acting. It was truly great."

Sir Richard nodded, with brightening eyes.

"Yes, a surprise, too, sir, even to me, her father. I can scarcely believe it. And her first attempt, Mr. Wilton."

"Her first attempt, yes," said Caryl, his eyes fixed on the now downcast face.

It was clear then, that the old man knew nothing of her being Maida Carrington. She had concealed it from him.

"I hope you will make a long stay at the Castle," said Sir Richard.

There was a moment's pause. Maida's dark eyes looked up suddenly, and as suddenly dropped again; but not before Caryl Wilton had noted the glance and caught the shadow of the despair in the depths of the eyes. His heart was moved to a fierce sort of pity, and he would willingly have said to her, "Maida, my darling, let me end this torture of you whom I love so passionately, and do you give yourself to me. I will protect you." But, no, he could not do this. He knew that in her then mood she would yield nothing. No; he must wait until the end came naturally, and if he made her suffer, if he caused her to think he delighted in torturing her, it must be so. He would some day prove that of all the world he loved her most faithfully.

"It depends on circumstances, Sir Richard," he said, slowly.

"Well, well," said the old man, "I trust you will not forget us, Mr. Wilton. Pray look upon the Hall as your second home. My nephew—where is Guy?—will be only too delighted with a companion through the preserves. We have some game, Mr. Wilton. I am no shot, myself, but I can answer, I think for the game. You are an artist, I believe, too?"

Caryl Wilton bowed with a deprecatory smile.

"An admirer of art, Sir Richard." The old man nodded amiably and said:

"Well, they used to tell me that we had some good pictures at the Hall. They may be out of fashion now. Will you go through the gallery?"

"I shall be delighted."

Sir Richard rose, and drew Maida's arm through his.

"We will show you what we have," he said.

## To be Continued.

## HONEYMOON'S SPENT APART.

Sometimes Done by Accident—  
Sometimes by Design.

The average couple usually leave while the wedding bells are still ringing, glad to embrace a week or two of quietude before shaking themselves down in earnest to the serious business of life.

Ideas of spending the honeymoon differ. A recently married pair went to their separate homes immediately after the ceremony, the wife taking her usual place at the sewing machine as if no unusual event had marked the day; while the husband dressed himself in ordinary holiday clothes, an early train carrying him to Scarborough, England, where he enjoyed himself in solitary style for nearly a fortnight. During this time he never wrote a line to his wife, nor was she acquainted with his address.

Returning to the home of his parents, he permitted a couple of days to go by before calling on his better half. Then it was to inform her that he intended going to America, and would send for her in due course. A week later he sailed without so much as bidding his wife good-bye. She entertains little hope of ever seeing him again, and the neighbors wonder why the pair ever got married.

A gentleman who never permits any occurrence to interfere with business was married in great style to the pretty daughter of a wealthy merchant. The same afternoon witnessed him running about London, up to his ears in work, while his darling went to Paris for a month, accompanied by her mamma!

Pleading the poorness of trade as an excuse for not taking a holiday after the wedding, a fairly well-to-do grocer left his wife in her new home while he proposed going to his shop. Towards evening the young woman received a telegram stating that her spouse had gone to Doncaster races, but would return within a week. He returned with empty pockets—his favorites came in third, as usual, and a gold watch was the means of raising the fare home.

Pretty state of things to quarrel on the marriage day! A young bride wished to spend the honeymoon on the Continent; her partner voted for Douglas. As neither would give in they went their separate courses, much to the surprise and amusement of friends and guests. This peculiar couple never spend their summer holidays together—seemingly they intend to go on in the way they commenced.

Not only did a newly-married couple agree to spend their holiday apart, they also occupy different cottages though living in the same street. Occasionally they take walks together as during the courting days, otherwise their behavior appears to be merely friendly.

## DUKE BUYS A GHOST.

The Duke of Cornwall and York is sure to like his new home, which has been purchased for him while on his Colonial tour—Houghton Hall, in Norfolk, England. It is from twelve to fifteen miles from Sandringham, and those who like ghost stories will be interested to learn that there is a "Houghton" ghost, with a well established reputation. The ghost is stated to be the spirit of Lady Dorothy Walpole, who was the wife of Viscount Townshend. She is supposed to appear just before a death either in the Walpole or Townshend family, either at Houghton, where she was born, or at Raynham, the home of her husband. The late Lady Anne Sherson used to relate that many years ago she was at Raynham on the occasion of a ball. She, herself, as well as many other guests, were surprised to see a small lady, dressed in an antique costume, passing through the throng without apparently knowing anybody. On the following morning the news came of the unexpected death of Lord George Townshend, which had occurred during the previous night! The Houghton ghost is, however, hardly likely to make the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York feel very uncomfortable.

## OF GROWING SHORTER.

Everybody has noticed that in extreme old age people grow rapidly shorter, so that a person formerly of average height "grows down" into quite a diminutive man or woman. A German contemporary now points out that this decrease of height begins as early as the age of thirty-five years. At thirty, we are told, the human body has reached its full height, which is retained for a few years, after which the "growing down" process begins. At first, and for many years, the process is so slow as to be almost imperceptible, but at the age of about sixty it begins to be noticeable, and after seventy, even though the veteran does not stoop at all, the fact that he is "growing down" becomes apparent to everyone who sees him.

## A Run Down System.

SHOWS THAT THE BLOOD AND  
NERVES NEED TONING UP.

This Condition Causes More Genuine Suffering Than One Can Imagine—How a Well Known Exeter Lady Obtained a Cure After She Had Begun to Regard Her Condition as Hopeless.

From the Advocate, Exeter, Ont.

"A run down system!" What a world of misery those few words imply, and yet there are thousands throughout this country who are suffering from this condition. Their blood is poor and watery; they suffer almost continuously from headaches; are unable to obtain restful sleep and the least exertion greatly fatigues them. What is needed to put the system right is a tonic, and experience has proved Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to be the only never-failing tonic and health restorer.

Mrs. Henry Parsons, a respected resident of Exeter, Ont., is one of the many who have tested and proved the value of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. For many months she was a great sufferer from what is commonly termed "a run down system." To a reporter of the Advocate she gave the following story in the hope that other sufferers might benefit from her experience—"For many months my health was in a bad state, my constitution being greatly run down. I was troubled with continual headaches, my appetite was poor and the least exertion greatly fatigued me. I consulted a physician but his treatment did not appear to benefit me and I gradually became worse, so that I could hardly attend to my household duties. I then tried several advertised remedies but without result, and I began to regard my condition as hopeless. A neighbor called to see me one day and urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Having tried so many medicines without receiving benefit, I was not easily persuaded, but finally I consented to give the pills a trial. To my surprise and great joy I noticed an improvement in my condition before I had finished the first box and by the time I had taken four boxes of the pills I was fully restored to health. I no longer suffer from those severe headaches, my appetite is good, I can go about my household duties without the least trouble; in fact I feel like a new woman. All this I owe to that best of all medicines, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I would strongly urge other sufferers to give them a trial."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are recognized the world over as the best blood and nerve tonic, and it is this power of acting directly on the blood and nerves which enables these pills to cure such diseases as locomotor ataxia, paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, sciatica, neuralgia, rheumatism, nervous headache, the after effects of la grippe, palpitation of the heart, that tired feeling resulting from nervous prostration; all diseases resulting from vitiated humors in the blood, such as scrofula, chronic erysipelas, etc. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are sold by all dealers in medicine or can be had by mail, post paid, at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

## PROSPECTIVE WIVES.

Like the Turks and many other dwellers in Oriental lands, the Moors prefer "moon-faced" wives rather than lean ones, and are more solicitous as to the number of pounds which their brides weigh than about the stock of accomplishments they possess. A girl is put under the process of fattening when she is about twelve years of age. Her hands are tied behind her, and she is seated on a carpet during so many hours every day, while her "papa" stands over her with a matraque, or big stick, and her mother at times pops into her mouth a ball of couscoussou, or stiff maize porridge (kneaded up with grease, and just large enough to be swallowed without the patient choking). If the unfortunate victim declines to be stuffed she is compelled, so that ere long the poor girl resigns herself to the torture and gulps down the boluses to avoid being beaten.

## BRITAIN'S INDIAN ARMY.

The full strength of Great Britain's Indian Army is 300,000 men, of whom 230,000 are native and 70,000 British soldiers. In addition to this military force there are about 20,000 enrolled European Volunteers, and a native police, officered by white men, nearly 200,000 strong.

## A NOVEL RAILWAY.

In the western part of British Columbia is a novel railway, two miles in length. The rails are made of trees, from which the bark has been stripped, and these are bolted together. Upon them runs a car with grooved wheels ten inches wide.

## A FIREPROOF CURTAIN.

Aluminium has just been employed for the construction of a new fire-proof curtain to be used in theatres. The curtain is 60ft. wide by 54ft. high, is composed of aluminium sheets one-twelfth of an inch thick, and weighs 4,000 lbs.