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Maida's Secret.....

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

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Maida Carringford sat looking out on the moonlit sea, her hands clasped tightly in her lap, her beautiful head drooping with that lassitude which comes of sheer mental and physical exhaustion.

Of pursuit and capture she had no dread. Before her stretched the sea, a safe place of refuge. At the first sound of pursuing footsteps she had a vague desire to throw herself into the arms of the murmuring ocean, and end the drama in which fate had forced her to play the leading part.

Why she had come there, to the dreary, desolate sea-coast, she could not have said. Some thought of Caryl Wilton, and the place where she had last seen him before this fatal night, recurred to her, and almost mechanically she had turned her steps toward the cliff.

Once or twice at intervals, the lips quivered and the eyes glistened. It was when the deep, wistful tenderness and ineffable love that shone in Caryl Wilton's glance arose before her.

"And yet, now, he must despise and hate me—me, the lowest of woman-kind, who, already steeped in mean crime, was ready to secure my position by marrying Guy Hartleigh. Oh, it is well for me that I shall never see him again—never again!"

With noiseless step Wilton made his way along the beach. Drowned by the wash of the incoming tide, his footsteps did not reach her ears, and it was not until he knelt by her side, and, laying his hand upon her arm, whispered her name, that she knew he was near.

With a start she arose, and pressing her cold white hands against her bosom, looked down at him. Full on her face the moon poured its white light, as if it gloried in the loveliness it revealed. With wide open eyes she looked at him, faint delight shining through the doubt and fear which possessed her.

"Maida!" he murmured. Her lips quivered, and she pushed the hair from her forehead. "Is it you?" she asked, wonderingly. "Why are you here?"

He looked at her in loving reproach. "Shall I tell you why I am here?" he whispered, pressing her to him, and shuddering with infinite pity, as he felt how wet and cold she was. "I have come to lay my life at your feet, my darling, my queen! To offer you once again the love, which, all unworthy as it is, fills all my being."

"Love! You still love me?" she breathed, with self-scorn. "I still love you with a greater, deeper love, if that were possible, than I have ever loved you, Maida. I am at your feet, at the feet of the only woman I have ever loved—worshipped. Will you send me away?"

Trembling, panting, her hands pressed to her bosom, she looked down at him. What should she say? Send him from her—from the felon, the outcast! The selfishness of her love bade her do it; but her tortured heart pleaded for them both.

With a sob she stretched out her hands slowly, and, with a cry of almost fierce delight, he caught her to him. Not white and cold now, but flushed and burning, she hid her face upon his shoulder.

"At last—at last!" he whispered, kissing her passionately. "Oh, my darling, are you really mine at last? Can I believe that it is true—that it is not a dream—that you are here in my arms—that I can kiss you like this, and this—and that you love me?"

"I love you," she whispered, with a sad smile. "I have loved you since that night, long long ago—ever since that night! But—but I waited—her eyes filled with tears—"I waited until I was not fit for you to look at or touch."

"Hush, hush!" he murmured, hoarsely. "Let the past bury its dead. To me you have been, and always will be, while life is left, my darling and my queen! Hush! not a tear must spoil my perfect happiness. How wet you are, my darling."

"Wet—?" she murmured, looking down. "Yes, I had forgotten it; and she shuddered.

"And I, too," he said, with his short laugh. "Come, you are not afraid—you have no doubts now, not while I am here? Come, lean upon me, quite, quite close. Stay!"

And taking off his coat he wrapped it around her, against all her entreaties and faint struggles.

more uneasy. I suppose he has not recovered from the shock of losing your sister, though he acted very bravely at the time."

"Yes," murmured Constance, very demurely, and then changed the subject. "I wonder if Maida is happy? Wouldn't you like to see her papa?"

"The old man's hand trembled as he laid it on hers. "She went away because she did not wish to see us."

"I think she did not wish to see us here. It seems to me that it would make her happy to see us in her own home. I would like to go to her. If we went away I don't believe that Guy would—would care to leave. Perhaps it makes him more unhappy to see us constantly. But if he wished to go away to-night, he might."

"Yes, my dear, yes. I—I would like to see Maida—the name doesn't seem right," he said, when they were together. "Dear Maida! How good she was to me that night on the plains! Papa, I don't think it was strange for her to do what she did, do you? She was lonely and homeless; and, before God—very softly—she had as much right here as I have."

"Yes," said the old man, brokenly. "I have thought of that so many times. You are an angel, my darling!"

"At least, I am glad if you think so," and she smiled in her cheery way—the way which had done so much to bring the old man out of his sorrow, and make him believe that life yet gave some joy in it for him.

And so it was arranged between them; and before Guy had had any time to arrange for his own departure, he was informed of their intention. He cast a rapid glance at Constance, but her face was immovably demure, and he gained nothing from it; and he went off wondering if her only object was to get away from him, man-like forgetting that he had first proposed to go away from her.

As she had anticipated, he told Sir Richard that if they were going he would remain and look after the estate. Sir Richard begged him not to give up his trip, but Guy said it did not matter at all, so he made his preparations to remain alone at the Hall for an indefinite time.

He had asked how long Sir Richard intended to be away, and Sir Richard had looked interrogatively at his daughter. She had carelessly answered that it would be better not to fix any time, in order that they might be with Maida as long as they were contented there. Sir Richard had looked so happy at this that Guy, with an inward groan, realized that they might be gone for a year perhaps.

It had, for some reason, been easier for him to think of leaving Constance at the Hall than to think of having her go away from him. He felt safer, somehow, with her at home, and he watched her movements as she went gaily about the old place, making preparations to go away from him, wondering if she really did not care for him at all.

If he only could have seen her when in the privacy of her own room he might have wondered less; for often when she had been gayer downstairs she would suddenly withdraw to her room, and there give way to tears that were always near the surface when she thought of Guy.

She did not know why he had left her for Maida, and she was so far from blaming him that she actually thought the better of him for it, though she could not but be grateful that the marriage had not taken place, to cause the everlasting misery of at least four persons. Still, she could not tell him that she honored him for what he had proposed doing. He must somehow discover it for himself. But, ah! how was he to discover it?

In the midst of all the hurry and preparation, Constance had not forgotten the good dame, at whose little cottage she had spent some of the happiest hours of her life. One afternoon, after she had been there for some time, she sent the phaeton home, intending to walk herself. She had not gone very far on her way when she was overtaken by a rapid footstep, and, even before she was accosted, her heart began to flutter expectantly.

"May I walk with you, Constance?"

It was Guy, who apparently had been taking a long walk already, for his shoes were dusty, and his face ruddy with exercise.

"You wish to, but it is not necessary. I do not mind walking alone."

Guy bit his lip and walked by her side for some time in silence. Then he exclaimed: "Would you rather walk alone?"

"Oh, no," carelessly. "I shall not mind if you walk with me."

Again Guy relapsed into silence and walked moodily by her side for some minutes. She was fully alive to the mood he was in, and her heart almost stood still every time he turned his anxious eyes upon her. At last he asked: "Why need you go away? I was willing to go."

"We wish to see Maida. We wish to see her."

"I did not mean that," he said, with reproachful sadness. "But you believed it at the time," she insisted, still with her head turned away.

"I hoped it, even though I had no right to do so. I know it was base, but I did not mean it so."

"I never thought it was so," she turned, and he saw that her eyes were filled with tears. "Forgive me? Why, Guy, I love you!"



YOKE BLOUSE.
32 to 40 Bust.

A Golden Thanksgiving

Uncle Jake and Aunt Chloe, while sunning themselves at their cabin door, were telling marvellous tales of former good times to two rapt listeners, Harry and Hollis Rowell.

"You 'member de time," said Aunt Chloe, "when Miss Julie was married? She slip down de back stair, jes' befo' 'em to go down to de cellar, an' 'em cum out in de back yard wid her dress flung ober her arm, an' her white veil a-ootin' rou' an' rou'!"

"Member, Chlo! I kin las' dat supper yet! Didn't Miss Julie hab me ketch a 'possum, an' you table it wid taters, an' slip it on de roab fur to tease old Marse an' Mis' Golly? Miss Julie hab her fun as she go long, shore!"

"Yes," said Aunt Chloe, "she staid down 'our cabin talkin' and tellin' us what she gwine sen' us fur Thanksgiving, 'til Misser Ross, de bridegroom, he was plum crazy lookin' fur her."

"But de supper, Chlo," anxiously suggested Uncle Jake, "de supper! You ain't forgot de supper? Goshun, but hit makes my mou' water till yet! An' den de Thanksgiving! I kin mos' taste dem vittles 'till now!"

"Next week is Thanksgiving again, Aunt Chloe," said Harry. "No, chile! I ain't no mo' Thanksgiving fur dese ole folks! Ole Marse an' ole Mis' is gone to de Jerus'lem late, lak de pel'can in de wil'erness. No, honey; when we gits up to de glory lan', we kin keep de Thanksgiving, but we ain't got nothin' here—nebbur no mo' fureber!"

Just then the boys were called, and walked away, feeling sad and thoughtful. "Harry, can't we give Uncle Jake and Aunt Chloe a Thanksgiving dinner?" asked Hollis.

"I don't know. I was trying to think how we could do it. I've only a dollar, and that wouldn't buy much."

"I've got a dollar and a half, and I'll give my turkey."

"Well, let's get mamma to make some pumpkin pies—and I'll give my pig. The pig and turkey were the little fellow's only possessions, and were great pets. 'Fritz' knew his ferocious when called, while 'Frisky' had been taught to turn a somersault for an apple. But he had lately grown so fat that he only grunted and gave his tail an extra curl to show his appreciation of favors. After the boys had performed the duties required of them they sat down under a tree in the yard to discuss Thanksgiving. Their invalid aunt, leaning languidly back at an upper window, heard their conversation, and knew the boys were in a dilemma. She signalled them, and their faces brightened as they glanced up. On the way upstairs Harry suggested consulting Aunt Violet, and they ran with lighter hearts into her room. Each kissed her gallantly on the cheek.

"Boys, you never forget to bring me flowers or something else you think will make me happy, but you forget to let me share your troubles. I don't think it is hardly fair of you." So they told her of their plans. She smiled and held out a hand to each.

"Some good angel surely put that happy impulse in your hearts. Suppose we enlarge the plan and include all of the colored people?" That was the thought that came into Harry's mind, and he turned to his brother. "We must devise ways and means," said Violet. "To begin with, you now have between you two dollars and fifty cents, a pig and a turkey."

"Yes," said the boys, looking down. "That is a good beginning. I will give Beauty, and—"

"Give Beauty? Oh, no!" the boys exclaimed. "Yes, boys; I really don't need a cow, and I'll give a dollar, and your father and mother and Tom, too, will each give a dollar; that will be six dollars and a half. Three-year-old Trixy climbed the stairway after the boys, and had been standing unnoticed at the door. When their aunt ceased speaking she toddled her arm. Putting the docket pen in her aunt's lap, she hissed: "I div Kitty to Fantsdivin." Aunt Violet hugged the dimpled darling, while Hollis exclaimed: "Why, baby, people don't eat cats!"

How the boys did work—at any and everything to augment the little fund. Aunt Violet was busy, too, and Mr. and Mrs. Rowell entered heartily into the affair. A day or two before Thanksgiving, Aunt Julia and Cousins Kate and Belle came over to assist in the arrangements. With whitewash, garlands and flowers they transformed the large, unsightly barn into a veritable banquet hall. The boys, with valuable assistance from Tom, made a long table and some benches. The girls baked the cakes and bread, not forgetting potato pone and rusk. Harry and Hollis now proceeded to issue the invitations. None but the aged were invited, those who had spent their youth in toil and service. The boys went first to Uncle Jake's cabin. As they came near they saw Uncle Jake sitting before the door with half-closed eyes, his cob pipe in his mouth, and heard Aunt Chloe say:

"Ole nan, peartun up, an' go see if you kin kill sumpin' fur Thanksgiving; I don't keer what, jes' so it's sumpin' ter keep de da' in min'!"

"Chloe, I ain't hankerin' fur nuthin' but one of ole Miss' good dinners. I've mos' 'dade fur it; nothing else won't do me no good."

"All right, Uncle Jake, we've come to invite you and Aunt Chloe to eat dinner with us," said Harry. Uncle Jake started, and the pipe dropped into his lap.

"Lan' o' Goshun! Honey, if you'd 'a' bin a snake you'd 'a' bit me, but don't fool de ole nigger 'bout de dinner, chile! I can't stan' it."

"Here are yours and Aunt Chloe's invitations! Aunt Violet printed them herself for the best and biggest Thanksgiving dinner you ever eat." "Whee-e!" ejaculated Uncle Jake, springing to his feet stiffly. He had just discovered where his pipe had fallen!

Aunt Chloe, seeing his pantaloons afire, threw the contents of her dishpan over him in her anxiety. The boys screamed laughing, and ran on to deliver the other invitations.

"Jes' my luck! Ef de Angel Gabriel was to blow his horn now, I'd hab to hide. De debil hisself sent dat fire to keep me from dat dinner," said the old man.

The neighbors from the adjoining town, having heard of the "benefit" came in force, and each brought some welcome contribution. Aunt Maria Treelaff hobbled in with her stick, stopped, took a look at the table, then turned to Tom and said, "Buddie, is you gwine ter eat now?"

"No, auntie."

"Den, honey, hole my stick, so I kin use bofe han's."

Uncle Jake and Aunt Chloe stepped up. "Jacob, hit looks lak I dream de Jerus'lem supper ole de Lam'! I never 'spected ter see such a sight! I tell I sot down in de Jerus'lem city!"

"No mo' did me, honey. Bress de Lawd! Ef we only had dis every 'yar! Dat would dede de time in two parts—de fust half we'd be 'joying de pleaser' ob de memory; de las' half we'd be smakin' our mou's fur—fur what's 't come."

Then an eloquent blessing was asked by the preacher, "Fur dis golden 'Thanksgiving' feasts."

Aunt Violet, ever thoughtful for others, whispered to Tom to have the visitors adjourn to the house, and allow the colored people to enjoy their dinner without embarrassment.

"But befo' yo' go, ladies and gentlemen," said the Rev. Ezekiel Gumbo, "let us return thanks, fust to the Giver of all good, an' nex' to the two bressed chilren to who we owe de pleasure of dis 'golden' 'casion. We thanks de kin' people, too, who has helped; but ef it hadn't 'a' bin fur dese two boys ef dey wouldn't 'a' tho't of it; jes' so 'a little chile shall lead 'em."

Harry and Hollis were the happiest of the whole Rowell family, and ate their turkey with much relish, conscious of having brought great joy to humble creatures.

FACTS ABOUT CANCER.

Regards It of a Parasitic Nature.

Significant facts in regard to cancer, its nature and causes, are brought out in a recent publication by Dr. Irving Phillips Lyon, pathologist to the University of Buffalo, based on extensive and prolonged investigations in that city. Dr. Lyon's studies lead him to favor the parasitic origin of cancer and to regard it as associated with certain localities, races and modes of life. The figures for the period of nineteen years (1880 to 1899) showed that German wards in Buffalo with a mean population of 104,753 had 888 cases of death from cancer, while those inhabited largely by native-born Americans with a population of 109,527 had 450 cases. The German wards include Poles, as the latter came from German Poland, and it was found impossible to separate the two races. On the other hand, the Italian quarters, though densely populated, showed a low ratio of cancer mortality. The highest cancer ratio prevailed among the Irish population—viz., 6.40 times that of the native Americans; then came Germans and Poles, whose ratio was 4.81, while among the Italians it was the lowest among all foreigners—viz., 1.93. In the native-born Americans the male cases of cancer were to the female cases as 50 or 60 to 100.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

Good counsels observed are chaint of grace.—Fuller.

The beauty seen is partly in him who sees it.—Boyce.

Admiration is the daughter of ignorance.—Franklin.

In great attempts it is glorious even to fail.—Longinus.

The one prudence of life is concentration.—Emerson.

The golden age is before us, not behind us.—St. Simon.

Levity in behavior is the bane of all that is good and virtuous.—Seneca.

Better to be driven out from among men than to be disliked by children.—Dana.

Loving kindness is greater than laws; and the charities of life are more than all ceremonies.—Talmud.

Have you so much leisure from your own business that you can take care of that of other people that does not belong to you.—Terence.

Invisible pictures are a novelty due to a German. Salts of cobalt are used for the printing of such pictures; this ink shows faintly pink, so pink paper is used, thus hiding the design and giving the appearance of blank paper. On being warmed the ink shows a deep blue, and the picture is plainly revealed. Apart from other and more serious uses, these invisible pictures will make good amusement for children.

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