

# Prince Charlie.

By BURFORD DELANNOY.

(Continued.)

She would reject so poor a substitute for love, and she would be right. There would be no hesitation; he knew that instinctively. He had once seen the blaze of anger in those now closed eyes; the memory remained with him. Yet that substitute was all he had to offer her; all he felt for her now—so he told himself.

Was it? Was it in very truth? He asked himself the question, and his throbbing heart made answer. But his lips formed another reply, although unspoken. They were tightly shut, firmly set. The tension was the reply itself.

Yet—he could not help it—he wondered whether it could be possible. That the woman from whose face he scarcely took his eyes was what he thought her. Whose emotion and love for her child had been so real and earnest, whose gratitude had shown itself in her humanity to him. To him! He who had so grossly insulted her that night on the seat. Even in sleep, toll-tale sleep, when that watchful control which we may keep on our waking expression is no longer possible, even then the lines of her face were all of purity and gentleness.

The lips were curved in sweet, soft curves; a faint flush was on her pale cheeks; her white brow was wholly serene. It was surely as innocent a face as the little one's to which—he saw it now for the first time—it bore so striking a likeness. Was it possible that a woman could sin, or be sinned against, and remain unsullied?

When the time for medicine came round again, he gently touched the child with intent to waken her. Then drew his hand away. He felt that she was so much cooler, the flush had almost gone from her face, that he determined not to disturb her. To let her awaken of her own accord. So the night passed.

During all those long hours, Masters might have applied wisdom to a grasping of the situation. But it has been well said, that wisdom does not pour knowledge from above as the clouds let down rain. It is to be delved for patiently and with hard toil, at the cost of flinty hands, and, mayhap, of skinned knuckles.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The Breaking of The Day.

The eastern sky was painted rosier and rosier; day broke. Still the sleepers slept, and the watcher watched. Never moved he except when need arose to feed the fire. Seven o'clock. Eight o'clock. Then Gracie woke. Gracie, save for weakness, her own bright, clear-headed, intelligent little self. He was once more making up the fire. Turned round at the sound of her voice, to find her sitting up in bed laughing at him.

"Prince Charlie! I'm ashamed of you! You dirty boy! Don't you know what tongs are made for?" Then she laughed at him again! A faint little laugh though, and so exhaustive that after it she fell back on the pillows, scant of breath. The laugh aroused the mother, trained by love to awaken at the least sound. She sprang to her feet and hastened to the bedside. When she saw the change for the better in her child, the smile on the little face, thankfulness overwhelmed her.

Never had waking moments been more sweet. It was less like waking than like a dream itself. She hugged Gracie to her bosom; just escaped crying over her.

Masters smilingly humoured the child—a little tyranny is a welcome sign in a patient; said, suiting the action to the word—

"Well I'll use the coal scoop, as you object so to my hands."

"Look at your fingers! Isn't he a dirty boy, mama? I mustn't let him touch my clean nightgown, must I?"

It was a challenge! Masters saw through the ruse. Her desire was that he should make pretence he wanted to catch hold of her. Then she would struggle to escape him. It was a game she was very fond of—he was to catch her after a long while—and then the game would begin all over again. Peering to excite her, he took no notice of the thrown-down glove; merely remarked—

"Well, you look all the better for your sleep." Added, with a smile: "Both of you."

The mother's heart was too full to speak. Her child was hers once more. Had come back to her from out the Valley of the Shadow of Death. After a long pause she managed to look up at him, tears bedewing her eyes, and inquired—

"Don't worry about me! I am as right as right can be. Just let me go to your bath room, will you? I shall emerge from it as fresh as the proverbial lark."

"You will stop to breakfast?" Gracie caught the suggestion in a moment; interposed eagerly—

"Oh, yes, Prince Charlie! You will! Won't you? Have breakfast with

me—out of my own tea service."

"Very well. I'll have a bath, and then come and breakfast with you, Gracie—out of your very own cups and saucers and plates. That's understood."

He went to the bath-room. His matutinal cold water sponge was a thing he would have missed dreadfully. During his absence, the doctor paid an early morning visit.

Masters was pleased when he returned to the sick room to see the happy look on the mother's face. Gracie was out of danger the doctor had said. Was going on splendidly—thanks, she said, to—

"To Prince Charlie, mama! I heard the doctor say so. He's a fairy prince who comes and saves little girls."

Gracie held Prince Charlie with one hand; her mother's with the other, as she spoke—

"Prince Charlie, I want to kiss you."

He submitted to the wish of the little autocrat. Both her arms went round his neck as she gave him what she called her "extra nicest."

After that there was a happy breakfast party. The cups were very small; Gracie propped up with pillows, had to fill them many times. But that was just as well; the greater demand, the greater her pleasure.

The plates too, were not quite large enough to hold ordinary slices of bread and butter. But then, as Gracie explained, you could hold your bread in your hands, couldn't you?

As for the cups, small cups were very fashionable—mama had told her so. It wasn't good manners to eat and drink too much; even if you were ever so hungry. But it was quite good form to say the tea was hot even if it was quite cold. That was part of the game.

The child's daily improvement was of the rapid kind. In less than a week she was skipping about the room. In ten days, well wrapped up,

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was playing—literally skipping—on the sun-lit sands.

And during the ten days? The author and the mother drifted apart! As the child's convalescence became assured his visits grew less in number; shorter in length.

From visiting three times a day his calls came down to once. His usual hour's visits were curtailed. He stayed but a quarter of that time.

When the child asked a reason, he was busy, he said. But the mother, listening, was not for a moment deceived. Read in his eyes that there had been no removal of his doubt of her. Her pride rose—rose higher and higher and higher day by day.

Her struggle was a hard one, to keep the bitter resentful feeling down. She endeavoured to stifle it with thought of the gratitude she owed him. But it was hard, terribly hard. She was not of a lachrymose temperament at all, but her eyes often tear-filled when she thought of him.

He was cold to her; grew more so; coldly courteous and reserved. Instinctively he feared his own weakness. Kept so close a guard upon himself, so firm a brake upon his feelings, that intercourse with him became depressing and wearying.

There was no longer the old easy flow of talk; words came with difficulty; conversation was an effort on both sides. Forced conversation is usually a failure.

She saw clearly that but for his love for the child—and that, she knew, was genuine—he would not have come to the house at all. She felt that all the while he spoke to her courteously and politely, he was suspicious of her. She showed nothing of her indignation; that would have been acknowledgment of the hit.

Suspicious of what? she asked herself. Asked not once, but a hundred times a day. Her pride would not allow her to put the question to him; so they drifted further and further apart. To her it seemed as with Ichabod; the glory had departed.

Sorry? She was heart-broken over it. She had not learned to love him; she had cared for him all along. More even than she had known, more than she knew even now. The sweet helpful gentleness of his care for her child when sick, had shown him in a light in which few women would have failed to admire—nay, more than that; to love him.

He was a veritable prince to her; she could have worshipped him. Her soul had gone out to him—and his to her—so naturally she had scarce noticed its passage. She felt she had known him all her life; so perfectly their thoughts and views seemed to dovetail one another.

There had been no shaping and moulding and rubbing off of corners; no making of rough edges to fit evenly all that is usually the work of time. It is said that there is no soul but somewhere on this crowded earth another soul responds unto its needs. The meeting is still a rarity but kindly old Time goes on with his everlasting pruning and polishing and planing down to suit mutual requirements.

He has them—has the man with the



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say the and hour glass—in his workshop; hundreds and thousands of young couples. He lets them rub along together. Fate having joined them, until the roughnesses are all worn away and it is scarcely noticeable—certainly not by the young people themselves—that they were not expressly made for each other.

The manufactured article produced in that workshop of Old Time is durable and generally gives satisfaction. Looks so much like the real thing that most people want nothing better. Some people prefer it even, take more pride in it.

Besides, the Merchandise Marks Act is not in force in regard to this particular class of goods, so there is not much loss. It all bears the same label and there is no penalty for deceiving the public. It is all marked—hall marked; Love.

Sometimes, however, it happens that two souls come together whom Nature has really designed and moulded each to each. It is fraught with much sweetness, such a meeting; sweetness as of music. The harmonies are so perfect and so pure, it seems no power on Heaven or earth could destroy the enduring melody by a jarring note.

(To be continued.)

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(Denver Post.)

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bull weighed approximately 2000 pounds, the head and antlers, mounted, weighing 275 pounds. The animal was killed on Copper River, Alaska, after a long chase of several days over mountains and through valleys. The animal was the leader of a large herd, many of which were killed, but the big bull moose was the object of the hunt after he was spied by the party.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

### Labor Unions Unite to Fight the Terrible Disease.

Chicago, Feb. 17.—Tuberculosis farms, to be established in different sections of the United States by labor organizations, for the treatment of union workers afflicted with consumption, have been advocated by President Geo. W. Perkins of the cigar makers' international union. The union, for a month has had under consideration, establishment of such an institution for the benefit of that organization. By a narrow margin the members voted against a plan submitted. A new plan now in preparation, probably will be adopted. The new scheme is broadened to include other international unions. Perkins' suggestion is in the country to join hands. According to the plan, farms would be located in North Carolina, the Adirondack mountains, in the middle West and on the Pacific coast.

An old negro in Louisiana was ill and called in a doctor. He did not get any better, and another doctor was sent for. He felt the pulse for a moment, and then looked at the tongue. "Did the other doctor take your temperature?" he asked. "I don't know, sah. I hain't missed anything buy my watch as yit, boss."

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