



The red mirage blinds Farquhar's eyes when he sacrifices himself to protect his father's memory, and to protect the girl he loves. Nameless in the Foreign Legion, going through worse than death at the hands of those who should have been his friends, the mirage still blinds him, and when the mirage dissolves in the love and sympathy of a real woman, it seems too late. But you must read the story to know how completely a "perfectly good" woman may ruin the life of an impulsive, chivalrous man, and how a sympathetic, loving one may help him to life and hope again.

CHAPTER I.

Beginnings.

"And so you have really made up your mind, Richard?"

"With your consent, mother."

Mrs. Farquhar sighed and tapped an impatient tattoo on the fender with her small, well-shod foot.

"My share in the matter has not the slightest importance. You might have spared me the farce."

"It's not a farce; as it happens, I want your consent. It's true—I'll marry without it—but it will make all the difference to my happiness." He put his head a little to one side and looked at her whimsically. "Really, mother, you are the last person to blame me for falling in love. It was you who taught me to adore the sex."

She made no answer. But she glanced up at the tall Venetian mirror and her mouth relaxed. She undoubtedly possessed a charm which made it seem scarcely credible that the man beside her was her son. She was small but beautifully made. She possessed the nameless quality which excuses everything and has sent men in all ages from crime to great place and from great place to the gallows. Richard Farquhar bore her no resemblance, though it was conceivable that without the wig and the coating of powder she might have revealed a certain similarity of coloring. His face and broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped figure revealed race, also vigor and headstrong temperament, which a peculiar light in the eyes accentuated. At the moment his expression was gay, but it veiled excitement and something obstinately resolved.

"You are a vain old woman!" he said lightly. "I believe you expected me to be dancing at your apron strings in blind adoration all my life."

"I did nothing of the sort. I wanted you to marry—but not Sylvia Omney."

He looked at her in unconcealed surprise. Possibly her tone was new to him. It was sharp and irritable; it revealed her suddenly as an old woman.

"I think I must be rather like my father," he said thoughtfully. "I don't remember him, and I have never seen anything of his save an old letter to you. Here it is." From his breast pocket he took out an old letter covered with yellow, faded writing and unfolded it. "It gives me a queer feeling, too, when I read it," he went on slowly. "I might have written it myself—to the woman I loved. He must have loved you madly, mother. One feels in every line that you were a religion to him—that he would have sold himself, body and soul—"

"Don't!" she interrupted sharply, angrily. Then she gave a shrill, unsteady little laugh.

"My poor Richard! Yes, you are like him—very like him. But if it's the wrong woman—what then?"

"Of course, it must not be the wrong woman," he said slowly. "But my father chose rightly, as I know I have chosen. I have chosen a woman after

his own heart—Sylvia is like you, mother."

"Sylvia is like me?" She lifted her faded, still beautiful eyes to his face. "Yes, I suppose she is—what men call a womanly woman. God help men from what they call womanly women. Well—she turned away with a careless, almost contemptuous movement of the shoulders—"I can't save you. Take my blessing, Richard. That's what you want, isn't it?"

"Thank you. I may bring Sylvia to see you?"

"Of course. Sylvia and I get on very well. Has anything been heard of the brother?"

"I don't think so. But I shall hear tonight."

"Cut his throat probably." She glanced back at him with a curious little smile on her colorless face. "All the same, Sylvia is lucky. I am rather proud of you myself, Richard. You are the only man I know who dresses in perfect taste without looking a vulgar noodle. Good night."

She kissed him hurriedly as he held the door open for her, and for an instant she looked up into his face with a curious half-tender, half-whimsical grimace. Then she was gone.

An hour later Richard Farquhar entered the Omneys' drawing room. He found his host by the fireside, a somewhat lone figure with the white, thin face of a man never wholly at rest. He greeted Farquhar eagerly and nervously. We—I expected you before—"

"I have been kept at Aldershot," Farquhar answered. "I came my first free evening. I can't tell you how keen I have been to see you both again—and to hear your news."

The elder man seemed to shrink together. He glanced nervously over his shoulder, and his face was gray and sunken.

"There is no news, Farquhar. We traced him to Marseilles, and then followed a wrong scent over to Oran and farther south. It all came to nothing—the wrong fellow all the time. It broke me up. I've lost hope—all hope, Farquhar."

"He will come back," the other suggested.

"No, no; he was reckless and obstinate and—a bit of a coward. He couldn't face the disgrace—he left that to us—and he couldn't face me. I dare



"Sylvia," He Said Brokenly.

say I was harsh—but I swear I didn't deserve this. And now I have to lie and pretend and play this confounded comedy. People—the few who believe—will tell you that my son is sheep farming in Australia. Farquhar, what in heaven's name possesses a man to want children? Mine have been a curse—"

"You have your daughter," was the sharp interruption.

The banker glanced at the man beside him. The thin, bronzed face was slightly flushed, and there was a fire in the passionate eyes which seemed to cause the observer a new emotion. He turned away, his thin features twisted into a wry smile.

"Yes—I have Sylvia—naturally she is a great comfort. But she is young—you must always remember that, and one must judge youth by other standards. We must not expect too much."

"One might expect everything of Sylvia," Farquhar responded gravely.

Again the swift, anxious glance swept over his face.

"Ah, yes, you are young yourself. Well, I suppose you want to see her; I won't detain you. You will find her in the library, looking out some old prints for a well-intentioned futurist. We have become artistic, you know."

If there was a covert sneer in the last words Farquhar was not in a position to notice it, for he had already begun to cross the room. One or two people spoke to him, but he answered absently, and they did not detain him. A pair of heavy tapestry curtains separated the so-called library from the drawing room. He pushed them softly aside and entered.

Sylvia Omney stood at the long table beneath the subdued cluster of electric

A story of great love and great hate. Heart-stirring interest in every chapter.

light, her head bowed, her back toward him. She did not seem to hear his entrance, for she did not move, and he did not seek to call her attention. She was not looking at the great folio which lay spread out before her, but staring slightly into the shadows, her cheeks bathed in color, her lips parted in breathless anticipation. A moment later she lifted her hands to her face, and he saw that she trembled. He knew then that she was conscious of his presence, and that that same awe and dread of their dawning happiness held her as it had held him in paralyzed waiting.

"Sylvia," he said brokenly.

She did not turn. She looked up, and in the glass their eyes met. The color had fled, leaving her whiter than the dead purity of her dress; her jaw had dropped. For an instant it seemed to him that a veil had been torn from her face, leaving it piteously distorted.

"Sylvia!" he repeated in a changed tone.

She turned then with a little stifled gasp. Her hand with the lace handkerchief had flown to her lips in an instinctive effort at concealment.

"Oh," she said under her breath. "You! Oh, Richard!"

He strode across the room to her side. He seized her hands and kissed them in a stormy outburst of passion which seemed to terrify her. She shrank from him, vainly trying to free herself.

"Oh, Richard—don't—you must be more careful—we are not alone—there are people—"

He laughed up at her. His eyes were aghast. The subdued flicker of recklessness, never wholly absent, blazed up in defiance of her white timidity.

"I know there are people—hundreds of them—somewhere down in that dull old world which we've left miles beneath. Yes, I dare say, I am a little mad. I feel it—I'm glad of it. It's good to be mad like this—"

Suddenly her expression penetrated his intoxication. He stopped short. "Sylvia—you're not ill?" he said roughly.

She shook her head, half smiling, half tearful.

"You may not care what people think, but I do—all nice women do. We are not properly engaged. You forget that."

He nodded, his eyes fixed on her half-averted face.

"Perhaps you are right—women are different. In their love and in their religion they seek the outward, visible signs. I have brought the visible signs with me." He put his hand to his pocket and drew out a small case, which he opened and placed on the table before her. "That is my first gift," he said simply. As though drawn against her will, she turned. Her eyes rested on the ring in its cold, gray setting, and their pupils dilated with an amazed involuntary displeasure. It was a single, flawless emerald, square cut and set in a narrow band of sapphire.

Farquhar took it from its case and held it out to her.

"You don't understand. It can't be just now. It's as though we were re-

joicing in the midst of a terrible grief. Surely you have heard?"

"I know that your brother has not been found," he answered earnestly. "I know that he was—is very dear to you. Why should that come between us now?"

"Because—" She made a little, feeble gesture of despair, and then went on breathlessly. "It's not for myself, Richard. There is my father to be considered. Robert's loss has broken his heart. He is ill—you must have seen that—I can't tell him that I am going to leave him—"

"I don't ask it of you. I shall be patient. I shall wait a year—two years, but you can't keep me on the outside of your life while I wait. You belong to me—you gave yourself to me. I don't claim more than you gave—I wouldn't claim that much if I saw it was not for your happiness—and now I hold you above my life, my honor—"

"Oh, hush! hush!" She looked at him with terrified, beseeching eyes. "Please don't say that—I don't want to hear it, Richard. It sounds so—wild and mad, and your eyes frighten me. Be reasonable and gentle—dear."

The hard lines of violence smoothed themselves from his face as if by a miracle. With an almost feminine tenderness he took her icy hand between his own and chafed it.

"Forgive me—I think I have a devil in me, Sylvia, a little black fiend that drives me—well, to the very devil, in fact." He stopped, his eyes narrowing as though at some vision which he could not fully face. "If I lost you—Sylvia, what is the matter?" He looked at her more intently, and then, with a sudden flash of perception. "Something has happened—out there in Algiers. What?"

She did not answer. She was not even looking at him. Following her glance, he turned slowly on his heel. A man who had stood hesitating on the threshold now came toward them, his hand extended.

"Forgive me, Miss Omney. I interrupted, but I understood that I should find you here, and I could not wait. You see, I am punctual to the hour and to the day."

He spoke in English, with a faint accent that was not displeasing. Richard Farquhar drew back. The vehemence had vanished from his manner, leaving him curiously at ease. Sylvia Omney glanced at him, swiftly, with an almost childish appeal and fear.

"Richard, this is Captain Arnaud. We met out in Algiers. Captain Arnaud—this is Mr. Farquhar."

Both men bowed. The Frenchman smiled with cordial recognition.

"I have heard your name often, Mr. Farquhar. You are what is called an old playfellow, are you not—a privileged position?"

For an instant Farquhar waited, his eyes fixed on the girl's white face. She did not look at him or speak.

"Indeed, most privileged."

He picked up the emerald ring and slipped it carelessly back into his pocket.

It is a pity that some persons lack the tact to break unhappy news inoffensively. Perhaps it is thoughtlessness that is responsible for a good deal of the sadness in the world—especially in the cases of spoiled women who play with the affections of men whose love is deep.

How much sorrow might have been saved if between Sylvia and Richard there had been really a mutual thoughtfulness and effort to spare heartbreak and soul-misery—than which there is no greater misery.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

DOGS AND CATS UNDER FIRE

Domestic Animals Are Affected Differently by the Noises Insuperable to Warfare.

Bombardments affect different animals in different ways. Dogs, as a rule, show great distress when shells burst near them and howl piteously. On the other hand, they have been known to dash along the front of a trench during infantry fire, barking and apparently enjoying the noise.

Cats do not care whether they are shelled or "machined" as long as they have a dry corner and food when they are hungry.

There have been instances of lost dogs and cats actually venturing into the British trenches during an engagement. Some of them lived in cottages near the firing line—long since destroyed—and clung to the remnants of their homes; others strayed a long distance. A nondescript dog, with an Armentieres address on his collar, turned up near Wytchaeete early one morning, spent the day with a territorial battalion, disappeared at dusk, and was never seen again.

A West-country yeomanry contingent was adopted in the thick of a fight near Fortuin in May by a black cat, which survived a bombardment

that killed many men, and has since lived snugly in billets with an identification disk around its neck.

Regimental mascots appear to have the best time, for they stay in billets, live on the fat of the land, and are made much of by the local inhabitants. The pampered terrier of a certain famous regiment of foot guards sat on the top of a transport wagon at the tail of the battalion and barked at all the civilian dogs he passed.—London Tit-Bits.

Foretold by Oil.

Among the Kherrias of India there is a very curious marriage ceremony. Taking a portion of the hair of the bride and bridegroom in turn from the center of the forehead, the priest draws it down on to the bridge of the nose. Then, pouring oil on the head, he watches it carefully as it trickles down the portion of hair. If the oil runs straight on to the tip of their nose their future will be fortunate, but if it spreads over the forehead or trickles off on either side of the nose, ill luck is sure to follow. Their fortunes told, generally to their own satisfaction, the final part of the ceremony takes place. Standing up side by side, but with faces strictly averted, the bride and bridegroom mark each other's forehead with "sindar" (vermillion).

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Washington, D. C.—The chewing gum habit has cost the American people for chicle alone nearly \$35,000,000 in the last ten years, or almost five times as much as we paid Russia for Alaska, according to figures furnished by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, of the Department of Commerce. Normally our annual imports of chicle amount to 7,000,000 pounds, for which we pay about \$2,500,000 in the countries of origin, and to which must be added customs duties in our own ports of about \$750,000.

Imports of chicle gum during the fiscal year 1915 were as follows: From Mexico, 2,197,000 pounds; from Canada, 2,181,000 pounds; from British Honduras, 1,139,000 pounds; from Venezuela, 952,000 pounds; from the Central American republics, 26,000 pounds; from all other countries, 5,000 pounds. Chicle is not produced in Canada, but large quantities from other British possessions are handled through the Dominion. In 1913 the total imports of the gum amounted to 13,759,000 pounds, and that is the record importation for any one year. In 1915 the total was 6,500,000 pounds.

Chicle is the dried milky juice of the sapodilla tree, which is one of a large family of tropical trees known as bully-trees. Some of the gum is used as a substitute for gutta serena, but the bulk of it is used in the manufacture of chewing gum.

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