



JOSEPH STAGG IS FILLED WITH DISMAY WHEN HE LEARNS CAROLYN HAS BEEN LEFT TO HIS CARE.

Synopsis.—Her father and mother reported lost at sea when the Dunraven, on which they had sailed for Europe, was sunk, Carolyn May Cameron—Hannah's Carolyn—is sent from New York to her bachelor uncle, Joseph Stagg, at the Corners. The reception given her by her uncle is not very enthusiastic. Carolyn is also chided by the stern demeanor of Aunt Rose, Uncle Joe's housekeeper.

CHAPTER II—Continued.

The window was open and she went to it and looked out. A breath of honeysuckle blew in. Then, below, on the porch, she heard the uneasy movements of Prince. And he whined.

"Oh, poor Princey! He doesn't know what's become of me," thought Carolyn May.

Downstairs, in the great kitchen, Aunt Rose was stepping back and forth, from table to sink, from sink to dresser, from dresser to pantry. As the daylight faded she lit the lamp which swung from the ceiling and gave light to all the room.

It would have been impossible for the wisest person to guess what were the thoughts in Aunt Rose's mind.

A glad little yelp from the dog tied to the rail of the porch sounded suddenly. Even Aunt Rose could not mistake that cry of welcome and she knew very little about dogs—to their credit, at least. She had heard no other suspicious sound, but now she crossed the room with firm tread and opened the porch door. Yes, a little white figure was down there hugging the whining mongrel.

Carolyn May's tearful face was raised from Prince's rough neck.

"Oh, Aunt Rose! Oh, Aunt Rose!" she sobbed. "I just had to say good night to somebody. Edna's mother came and heard our prayers and tucked us into my bed after my papa and mamma went away. So it didn't seem so bad.

"But tonight—why! tonight there isn't anybody cares whether I go to bed or not! But Prince! Prince, he knows just how—how empty I feel!" "You would better come in now and wash your face and hands again before going to bed. That dog has been lapping them with his tongue.

Sobbing, the little girl obeyed. Then she would have gone back up the stairs without a word had not Aunt Rose spoken.

"Come here, Carolyn May," she said quite as sternly as before.

The little girl approached her. The old lady sat in one of the straightest of the straight-backed chairs, her hands in her comfortable lap. The wet blue eyes were raised to her composed face timidly.

"If you wish to say your prayers here, before going upstairs, you may, Carolyn May," she said.

"Oh, may I?" gasped the little girl. She dropped her hands into Aunt Rose's lap. Somehow they found those larger, comforting hands and cuddled into them as the little girl sank to her knees on the braided mat.

If the simple "Now I Lay Me" was familiar to Aunt Rose's ear from long ago she gave no sign. When the earnest little voice added to the formal supplication a desire for the blessing of "Uncle Joe and Aunt Rose" the latter's countenance retained its composure.

She asked a blessing upon all her friends, including the Prices, and even Prince. But it was after that she put the timid question to Aunt Rose that proved to be almost too much for that good woman's studied calm.

"Aunt Rose, do you s'pose I might ask God to bless my mamma and papa, even if they are lost at sea? Somehow I don't think it would seem so lonesome if I could keep that in my prayer."

CHAPTER III.

"Well—She'll Be a Nuisance." Mr. Joseph Stagg, going down to his store, past the home and carpenter shop of Jedidiah Parlow, at which he did not even look, finally came to his destination in a very brown study. So disturbed had he been by the arrival of his little niece that he forgot to question and cross-question young Chetwood Gormley regarding the possible customers that had been in the store during his absence.

"And I tell you what I think, mother," Chet said, with his mouth full, at supper that evening. "I think her coming's going to bring about changes. Yes, ma'am!"

Mrs. Gormley was a faded little woman—a widow—who went out sewing for better-to-do people in Sunrise Cove. She naturally thought her boy Chetwood a great deal smarter than other people thought him.

"You know, mother," he said, on this evening of the arrival of Carolyn May, "I never have seen any great chance to rise, workin' for Mr. Joseph Stagg."

"But he pays you, Chet," his mother said anxiously.

"Yep. I know. Don't be afraid I'll leave him till I see something better," he reassured her. "But I might be clerkin' for him till the cows come home and never see more'n six or eight dollars a week. But now it's apt to be different."

"How different, Chet?" she asked, puzzled.

"You know Mr. Stagg's as hard as nails—as hard as the goods he sells," declared the gawky boy. "Mind you, he don't do nothin' mean. That ain't his way. But he don't seem to have a mite of interest in anything but his shop. Now, it seems to me, this little niece is bound to wake him up. He calls her 'Hannah's Carlyn'."

"Hannah Stagg was his only sister," said Mrs. Gormley softly. "I remember her."

"And she's just died, or something, and left this little girl," Chet continued. "Mr. Stagg's bound to think of something new besides business. And mebbe he'll need me more. And I'll get a chance to show him I'm worth something to him. So, by and by, he'll put me forward in the business," said the boy, his homely face glowing.

"Who knows? Mebbe it'll be Stagg & Gormley over the door one of these days. Stranger things have happened."

Perhaps even Chetwood's assurance would have been quenched had he just then known the thoughts in the hardware merchant's mind. Mr. Stagg sat in his back office poring over the letter written by his brother-in-law's lawyer friend, a part of which read:



If the Simple "Now I Lay Me" Was Familiar to Aunt Rose's Ear She Gave No Sign.

From the above recital of facts you will plainly see, being a man of business yourself, that Mr. Cameron's financial affairs were in a much worse condition when he went away than he himself dreamed of.

I immediately looked up the Stone-bridge Building and Loan association. It is even more moribund than the papers state. The fifteen hundred dollars Mr. Cameron put into it from time to time might just as well have been dropped into the sea.

You know he had only his salary on the Morning Beacon. They were rather decent to him, when they saw his health breaking down, to offer him the chance of going to the Mediterranean as correspondent. He was to furnish articles on "The Debris of a World War"—stories of the peaceful sections of Europe which have taken care for the human wrecks from the battlefields.

I rather cramped Mr. Cameron's immediate resources for your sister to go with him, and he drew ahead on his expense and salary account. I know that Mrs. Cameron feared to allow him to go alone across the ocean. He was really in a bad way; but she proposed to come back immediately on the Dunraven if he improved on the voyage across.

Their means really did not allow of their taking the child; the steamship company would not bear of a half-fare for her. She is a nice little girl, and my wife would have been glad to keep her longer, but in the end she would have to go to you, as, I understand, there are no other relatives.

Of course the flat is here, and the furniture. If you do not care to come on to attend to the matter yourself, I will do the best I can to dispose of either or both. Mr. Cameron had paid a year's rent in advance—rather an unwise thing, I thought—and the term has still ten months to run. He did it so that his wife, on her return from abroad, might have no worry on her mind. Perhaps the flat might be sublet, furnished, to advantage. You might state your pleasure regarding this.

You will see, by the copy of your brother-in-law's will that I enclose, that you have been left in full and sole possession and guardianship of his property and affairs, including Carolyn May.

...a crocodile from the Nile Joseph Stagg would have felt little more at a loss as to what disposal to make of the creature than he felt now regarding his little niece.

"Well—she'll be a nuisance; an awful nuisance," was his final comment, with a mountainous sigh.

Thus far, Aunt Rose Kennedy's attitude towards the little stranger had been the single pleasant disappointment. Mr. Stagg had experienced. Aunt Rose was an autocrat. Joseph Stagg had never been so comfortable in his life as since Mrs. Kennedy had taken up the management of his home. But he stood in great awe of her.

He put the lawyer's letter in the safe. For once he was unable to respond to a written communication promptly. Although he wore that band of crepe on his arm he could not actually realize the fact that his sister Hannah was dead.

Any time these fifteen years he might have run down to New York to see her. First she had worked in the newspaper office as a stenographer. Then she had married John Lewis Cameron and they had gone immediately to housekeeping.

Cameron was a busy man; he held a "desk job" on the paper. Vacations had been hard to get. And before long Hannah had written about her baby—"Hannah's Carlyn."

After the little one's arrival there seemed less chance than before for the city family to get up to Sunrise Cove. But at any time he might have gone to them. If Joseph Stagg had shut up his store for a week and gone to New York, it would not have brought the world to an end.

Nor was it because he was stingy that he had not done this. No, he was no miser. But he was fairly buried in his business. And there was no "look up" in that dim little office in the back of the hardware store.

On this evening he closed the store later than usual and set out for The Corners slowly. To tell the truth, Mr. Stagg rather shrank from arriving home. The strangeness of having a child in the house disturbed his tranquillity.

The kitchen only was lighted when he approached; therefore he was reassured. He knew Hannah's Carlyn must have been put to bed long since. It was dark under the trees and only long familiarity with the walk enabled him to reach the back porch noiselessly. Then it was that something scrambled up in the dark and the roar of a dog's barking made Joseph Stagg leap back in fright.

"That that mongrel!" he ejaculated, remembering Prince.

The kitchen door opened, revealing Aunt Rose's ample figure. Prince whined sheepishly and dropped his abbreviated tail, going to lie down again at the extreme end of his leash and blinking his eyes at Mr. Stagg.

"The critter's as savage as a bear!" grumbled the hardware merchant.

"He is a good watchdog; you must allow that, Joseph Stagg," Aunt Rose said calmly.

The hardware dealer gasped again. It would be hard to say which had started him the most—the dog or Aunt Rose's manner.

CHAPTER IV.

Aunt Rose Unbends.

There never was a lovelier place for a little girl—to say nothing of a dog—to play in than the yard about the Stagg homestead; and this Carolyn May confided to Aunt Rose one forenoon after her arrival at The Corners.

Behind the house the yard sloped down to a broad, calmly flowing brook. Here the goose and duck pens were fenced off, for Aunt Rose would not allow the web-footed fowl to wander at large, as did the other poultry.

It was difficult for Prince to learn that none of those feathered folk were to be molested.

There was a wide-branching oak tree on a knoll overlooking the brook. Around its trunk Uncle Joe had built a seat. Carolyn May found this a grand place to sit and dream, while Prince lay at her feet.

When they saw Aunt Rose in her sunbonnet going toward the fenced-in garden they both jumped up and bounded down the slope after her. It was just here at the corner of the garden fence that Carolyn May had her first adventure.

Prince, of course, disturbed the serenity of the poultry. The hens went shrieking one way, the guinea fowl lifted up their voices in angry chatter, the turkey hens scurried to cover, but the turkey cock, General Bolivar, a big, white Holland fowl, was not to have his dignity disturbed and his courage impugned by any four-footed creature with waggish ears and the stump of a tail.

Carolyn's sunny disposition begins to have its effect upon Aunt Rose, with results that are amazing to Uncle Joe. You will enjoy the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Those Dear Girls.

Nell—"I understand My Cutting remarked that I looked so much like Miss Hoamley-Ritch. Isn't that awful?" Belle—"Yes, she's always knocking Miss Hoamley-Ritch, because she's jealous of her."

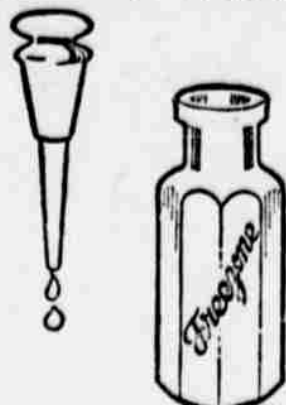
Earliest Guide Book.

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Not a Customer.

He was visiting in the city and went with an older relative to the city library. The relative, who wished to consult some books in the reference room, decided to leave him to be entertained in the children's room meanwhile. When she returned she asked the attendant in charge how he had got along and was told, "He's all right now, but at first I couldn't get him to look at a thing." Rather surprised, because he is generally fond of books, she turned to the youngster. "Why James, didn't you want to look at the pretty books?" "Aw," he said gruffly, "I didn't know she just wanted me to look at them; I thought she wanted to sell me one, and I wasn't going to buy any. I'm saving my money for a soldier belt!"

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Repatries in France.

Flotsam and Jetsam, our rapid fire repatriate team, noticed a couple of flappers wearing rather original hats. "I wonder if those are the latest hat styles from Paris," said Flotsam. "I chapeaux so," replied Jetsam, right off the bat.—Plano News.

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Delusions.

"What curious mistakes men make sometimes. I've just been reading, for instance, that Columbus imagined that he had discovered the Indies." "That's nothing to one I made. When I married my wife I thought I'd discovered Paradise." — Boston Transcript.

There are many tinkling cymbals in the land who seem to think that they are thinking symbols.

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A New Sentry.

A lieutenant at Camp Grant was riding past a guard the other night, and at the usual command to halt he stopped his horse and stood there. However, the guard didn't say another word, and after a short time the lieutenant burst out with: "Well, what are you making me stand here for? Expect me to stay here all night?" The guard answered: "Well, I didn't know what to say next. I've only been here for a week."

A Very Woman.

He (rapturously)—"You accept me? Then it's a bargain?" She (calmly)—"Certainly! I shouldn't consider it if it wasn't."

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Millions of people are weak and unfit, suffering all the time, in one way or another, from superacidity or acid-stomach. They don't seem dangerously sick. Just ailing. Going through life weak, listless, dragging one foot after another. They're nervous and irritable; lack power and punch, frequently have severe attacks of blinding, splitting headaches; subject to fits of melancholia and mental depression. And nearly always their stomachs are out of order, even though many experience no actual stomach pains—digestion poor—never getting anywhere near the full strength from their food.

So, you see, it's just this—acid-stomach—that is holding so many people back—sapping up the strength they should get from their food—taking away their vigor and vitality—leaving them weak and inefficient. Get rid of the excess acid. That's the secret of good health—the only way to obtain good digestion and assimilation. It is the right way to be well and keep strong. Ordinary medicine won't do any lasting good. The best they can do is to spur up your appetite for awhile.

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