

Rough-Hewn

By Dorothy Canfield

(Continued from Yesterday.)

Neale Crittenden, typical American young man, has grown up in Uniontown, a village near New York city, has been graduated from Columbia university and has taken a position with a lumber firm. At college he fell in love with Martha Wentworth, who declined his proposal to wed. Martha is spending a year in Germany with her father. Neale accepts his disappointment philosophically and heads his efforts toward success in business. In France, Marie Allen, about Neale's age, lives with her American father, who is foreign agent for an American firm. She is an accomplished linguist and pianist. Marie and Neale meet in Paris, where Marie needs an American tutor in French. Neale, a rather starchy scene takes place when Neale expresses dissatisfaction with the instructor she is receiving, and Mr. Vandover tells her he will find another instructor for her. Marie's piano teacher, Mme. de la Cruz, urges her to spend a year studying in Rome with an old music master. Neale is in Italy on a business and pleasure trip and plans to sail for America soon. In a Roman roof garden he meets Marie and is struck by her beauty and grace of manner. They learn that children in America they had known many of the same scenes in the country near Uniontown. Neale tells Marie that he expects to leave for China soon after his return to America.

They were standing now near a low wall, under some thick dark hick trees, a fountain dripping musically before them. Mechanically they sat down, looking earnestly at each other. "You see," began Neale, "I'm trying to find my way. I was in business in the states, and getting along all right. . . getting on, I mean, as they say. And then I got to wondering. It seemed as though, as though . . . I wasn't sure it was what I wanted to do with my life, just to buy low and sell high, all my life long. Perhaps there was more to it than I could make it. It certainly seemed to suit a lot of folks, fine. But I couldn't seem to see it. I was all

his shut, shut heart. . . Good God, what was he doing? At his silence, she raised her face towards him. To his amazement her eyes were shining wet with tears. And yet there was no sadness in her face. She was smiling at him, a wavering, misty smile. She stood up, made a little flexible, eloquent gesture with her hands and arms and shoulders, as if to explain to him that she could not trust herself to speak, and still smiling at him, the tears still in her eyes, walked rapidly away.

CHAPTER XLIV. After dinner that evening Miss Allen came up to where Mr. Livingstone and Mr. Crittenden stood together near the window and said to them, "Would it interest you at all to go to the soiree at Donna Antonia's tomorrow? She has been kind enough to offer me some cards of invitation, and it occurred to me if you haven't anything better to do that evening."

Livingstone carried one hand to his heart, the other to his brow, and professed inability to recover from the shock. "My dear young lady, it's inhuman to shatter my nerves with a bombshell like that without a word of warning! You know well enough I'd gladly give one of my ears for an invitation to Donna Antonia's. Why then the false modesty, as who should say, 'If you've nothing more interesting on hand just step up and let me make you a duke, do!'"

Miss Allen acknowledged the facetious intention of this with suitable laugh and looked at Neale. He said, "Oh, of course, I shall be glad to go." "That's good then. I shall hope to see both of you."

figure, dressed in yellow, a thin gold fillet binding her smooth dark head. She was talking, smiling, animated, at ease; and after she had played, much acclaimed. There was nothing surprising about that, thought Neale, applauding with all his might. Heavens, how beautifully she made music! She stood up, made a little flexible, eloquent gesture with her hands and arms and shoulders, as if to explain to him that she could not trust herself to speak, and still smiling at him, the tears still in her eyes, walked rapidly away.

CHAPTER XLV. The soiree was horrible to Neale, a nightmare, a glittering wall through which he could by no means break to reach her, over which he could scarce see at an immense distance her slim

repeated it, which she often did, he smiled down broadly on her. She was a pretty little thing. She was really quite an object of art, if that was what you called them. As Neale walked home with Livingstone at midnight he had made up his mind to take the first train to Naples the next morning. But he made no move whatever to do this, when the morning came. Dumb and stupid as a sheep, he made his way doggedly to the dining room at the earliest hour, to see Miss Allen take her coffee-oult. As he went in at the door, he realized that his calculations were all wrong, that she had been up late the night before and would certainly sleep late that morning. But Livingstone had already seen him and hailed him. It was too late to go back and wait. He sat down, gloomily stirred the sugar into his coffee and listened to Livingstone fizzle all over the place about the evening's entertainment which had uplifted him to exaltation. "You don't realize, Crittenden, what an opportunity that was to see exclusive Roman society, the kind that foreigners like us never meet, not the flashy, big hotel, off-color crowd. Why, I was introduced to name after name that sounded like a page out of Roman history."

Neale thought with a passing grimace that Livingstone's phrase was accurately turned—"introduced to names"—yes, verily. Well, names were what Livingstone was after. "Oh, you're already, Miss Allen," said Livingstone, springing to seat her with an agility for which Neale hated him. He himself sat like a lump, incapable because of the sudden rush of blood to his head, of anything but a silent answer to her greeting. Livingstone needed no help in keeping up the conversation. He flowed on, delightedly passing in review every detail of the evening of which

he had not missed a single one, apparently, from the way Donna Antonia's maid did her hair to the dandruff on the coat collar of the old Visconti. "Of course I know he's a great musician and all that, but really if you will let your hair grow so long, you ought to have a pocket clothes brush, and use it, oughtn't you? Why don't you do it for him, Miss Allen? Everyone says he is absolutely gone on you, that you could do anything with him!" He passed from this without transition to Miss Mills' toilette which had been, so it seemed, a veritable triumph.

"Yes, yes, wasn't it beautiful! Eugenia's clothes are simply wonderful." Miss Allen broke in to say enthusiastically. "She has the most never-falling taste."

"A never-falling pocketbook," corrected Livingstone. "You don't get far with mere taste dans ce bas monde."

Miss Allen finished her coffee, and, setting down her cup, remarked, "You two Americans seem to have a most agreeable impression last evening. Donna Antonia called me back to say that Signor Ambrogio would be glad to see more of you. She wished me

to ask you both if you couldn't come to have tea with her and with Signor Ambrogio this afternoon at 5."

(To Be Continued Wednesday.)

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