

delicately arched brows. In color they were of that changeable gray, which is sometimes violet and sometimes black. They were set wide apart, and had the guileless look of an innocent child. It had been said that you could look through Cicely Archdall's eyes into her mind. Rather, her pure soul looked fearlessly out at the sin and sorrow of life, through eyes undimmed by selfish desire or sordid motive. It was that which gave her face the sunlit look which was her peculiar charm.

"Come, Cicely," Mrs. Waldegrave urged.

"I was thinking," said Cicely. "I can't tell a story properly. I never could, but as you won't give me any peace, I'd better begin at the beginning in my own way."

"The year after you went abroad with Uncle Rudolf was the year I first met Humphrey. He was a friend of Ralph's at Lincoln's Inn, and had come down with him to Beresford for the shooting. I was just home from the Sacre Coeur. I needn't tell you now that we fell in love with each other, and you will already know that at first no one except ourselves was very much pleased."

"Humphrey was of a good family and a Catholic, but at that time he was only moderately well off, and intended to practise in Fordhampton, which all my people regarded as little short of exile. However, they gave way in the end, and we were married and home from our honeymoon before the following Lent. One thing mother had insisted upon—that Phillipson, who had been with us so long in every capacity, should follow me into exile."

"Poor Phillipson!" laughed Mrs. Waldegrave; "I can well imagine how sorry she was for herself, trying to keep up the dignity of the family."

"Oh, she was," said Cicely. "By the way, she's married here now and very happy. You must go and see her before you leave, she'll be so pleased. We didn't live out here then; it was long before the K.C. days. We had an old-fashioned house in Mason street, not far from St. Wilfrid's. I loved that old house and the life there. Besides Phillipson and a "Tweeny girl," we had a woman once a week to clean."

"Oh, that "woman once a week," what a thorn she was to me! Either she didn't come, or she broke all our plates and dishes, or she horrified Phillipson by wanting meat on Friday, or she stole. There was always something, until at last I had a brilliant idea. I went to our rector, Father Carr, and asked him to recommend me some one whom he knew, and he sent Mrs. Cunningham."

"How glad I was! Angel was quite a baby then, and Phillipson did manage to make it so uncomfortable if her underlings did not suit her. However, everything went on blissfully for some months, until one morning Mrs. Cunningham did not arrive. I knew the little street where she lived and went around during the morning. I knocked at her door more than once, but got no answer. Then I looked through the window, and I saw that she was sitting by the fireplace."

"Fearing she must be ill, I opened the door and went in."

"The fire had either not been lighted or had gone out, but she didn't seem to notice. Her face looked drawn and gray, and her poor hands were trembling."

"Are you ill, Mrs. Cunningham?" I asked.

"She looked at me dully, as though she scarcely understood, but she answered me at once."

"No, 'm," she said, "I'm not ill, but I'm in sore trouble; my Clementine's gone and left me."

"I knew Clementine quite well. I had often given her old blouses, and ties, and little things of that kind."

"Aunt Rosa, she was just the loveliest child. How Mrs. Cunningham came to be her mother, I never could think."

"She was tall and angular and bony, with no outward attractiveness of any kind, but Clementine was like a lovely flower. She had the bluest eyes, gentian blue, you know, and a delicate complexion and features and hair like spun, floss silk. Her mother just adored

her. Her husband had been lost at sea when Clementine was a month old, and ever since she had toiled and worked her fingers to the bone to bring her child up to something different to that which she herself had known."

"Clementine was, what is known as an "improver" to the millinery, not at one of the good shops, but at a third-rate house, in one of the third-rate streets."

"Left you!" I exclaimed, when she told me, not in the least realising what she meant, "has she got work out of town?"

"Mrs. Cunningham fumbled in her dress-pocket, and drew out a letter written on cheap, highly-scented paper, with a large sprawling C in gold on the envelope."

"I read the letter, written in a childish hand;

"Dear mother," it said, "I write these few lines, hoping they will find you well as they leave me at present. Dear mother, I am going to be a lady, and don't you take on about it, for I'm very happy. He is quite a gentleman, and has bought me a gold watch. I will write to you again when we have settled, so no more at present, from

Your loving daughter,

CLEMENTINE.

"Where has she gone to?" I asked.

"Is it where's she gone?" said Mrs. Cunningham, "the black-hearted devil that stole her knows, an' the God that made her."

"Is it myself would be sitting here, if I'd knew where she'd gone, the poor child? God help her."

"When I got her letter I went round to her companion, Carrie Webster. She's a bold hussy, that taught my girl all the wrong she knew, but I couldn't keep her off her. And I says, "Where's my Clementine?" I says.

"And is it me you're asking about Clementine, Mrs. Cunningham?" she says. "I wasn't supposed to be fit to speak to her ladyship a while ago," she says, "but I'd have you know, Mrs. Cunningham, that I'm a respectable girl, and don't consort with girls of your Clementine's stamp," she says, "nor yet with her gentlemen friends," and with that she lets out a laugh. God forgive me, I could have kilt her when I heard it, but I says no more to her, and I come home."

"Speaking to some one unsealed her sorrow, and the tears rolled down her cheeks. I lighted the fire and made her some tea, and then I went round with her to Father Carr."

"We searched for Clementine, but of course to no purpose. No one seemed to know with whom she had gone, and if Carrie Webster guessed, she did not divulge it."

"One other message her mother had from her, a postal card from Dieppe. On this she said they were on their way to Paris, then silence swallowed her up, and Mrs. Cunningham settled down to the tragedy of her life."

"Aunt Rosa, I wish I could make you understand all the pathos of it. That was what I meant when I said it was a story one could not put into words."

"That poor woman was just a revelation to me of what a mother's love could be."

"She kept on her little house, for she lived in—the hope that one day Clementine would return."

"An' what would she do, the poor child, if she found me gone?" she said to me one day, when I had urged her to move into a single room, which would have sufficed for her needs. After that I said no more to her."

"Every morning she went to Mass to pray for Clementine's salvation. Each time she frequented the Sacraments they were offered for this intention."

"All day she toiled for her daily bread, every night she went out to search for the child."

"It was the most pitiful thing. Late into the night, often far into the morning, she went fearlessly into unspeakable dens in the city to search for Clementine."

"She even got some photographs of herself taken. Oh! Aunt Rose, how I cried when she showed me the