

Stairs of Sand

By Anna M. Regan

(Continued from Last Week)

CHAPTER 6

Carol, coming out the doorway after telephoning, looked plainly disturbed. Her eyes were a bit wild, and she broke into their conversation without an apology.

"I've been called away, I must hurry so I'll ask you, Sara, to explain it to your Aunt."

"I surely will," Sara offered instantly. "Can't I help you in any way, you do look worried?"

"No, I don't need any help, thanks," Carol said, with a petulant toss of her head as she turned and slipped around the house.

"You see," said Sara to Cramer, "she's been like this ever since she returned to the farm, and I'd be glad to help her if she would let me."

"You're always wanting to help somebody—anybody but me. You didn't even come in to hear me sing."

"I heard you from the sun-parlor. There wasn't standing room inside you know."

"Would you mind telling me," he said and he was surprised at the tremor of his voice, "just why you treat me as you do? I can't think it's because you dislike me."

"I not only like you but I'm filled with gratitude for everything you've done for Nat. You've worked miracles with him."

To Cramer's ears delicately tuned to praise, Sara's softened voice and shining, grateful eyes made all the acclimation of the past week seem as nothing by comparison.

"He's so changed," she went on eagerly. "It's made us all so happy. If it only lasts."

"I feel sure it will," Cramer said, warmly. "I think he's had a real change of heart."

"Who knows? You may be right. We have spoiled him and loved him too much."

"Another reason for this change in him, he has perhaps fallen in love."

"I'm afraid so, with Carol and she a divorced woman. Mr. Cramer, you know how that will go with our family!"

Cramer frowned. "I hoped it was someone else! We must do everything possible to discourage this."

"I'm afraid it's too late," said Sara. "If they are honestly in love with each other, what then?"

"But surely that alone does not justify marriage."

"It is the only thing that does justify it!" said Sara, her hands tightly clasped in her lap and a far away look coming into her eyes.

Her momentary abstraction gave Cramer an opportunity to watch her unobserved. He had to admit there were moments when she was beautiful. They usually came when she was off her guard, when for a moment her mask slipped aside, showing a face of tender wistfulness.

There in the rose-laden atmosphere of the vine-enclosed summer house, he had a sudden desire to take her in his arms and kiss her. Discretion as usual restrained him, and he compromised by slipping his hand under hers and lifting it to his lips.

Instantly Sara was on her feet, and as he saw her slim, young figure slipping into the house, he felt as if youth itself were leaving him. In vain he told himself he was very foolish to be interested in this girl. But even as he warned himself of the danger, he felt himself drifting toward that possible conclusion, and in spite of himself he longed for that to happen. Let him have the thrill of Sara's love and the future could take care of itself!

When he re-entered the house he found most of the guests gone and Uncle Philo Leavitt pacing the floor in a high state of nerves. He was always irritable when he had to be present at one of his wife's parties and today his temper had not improved by the fact that this nephew had failed to put in an appearance at the house although he had promised to do so.

"I figured on Nat taking Sara home in my car," he thundered. "Jake and Mother shouldn't be left alone."

"But I shall be most happy to take the girl home," urged Cramer. "My car is at the door."

"Beryl called for Hedda a half-hour ago," explained Mrs. Leavitt. "She's having a birthday fete at her home tonight. You are to be there too, are you not, Mr. Cramer?"

"Yes, I have promised to be there," Neil Cramer

agreed. "We must see that Miss Leavitt is provided with a way to reach her home."

"Please do not worry about me," Sara urged. "I'll take the trolley."

"I'd rather," Uncle Philo insisted, "you'd let Cramer take you as long as he's willing."

"But there's no use putting him to so much trouble," Sara protested.

"I assure you it's not the least bit of trouble to run you home, Miss Sara. Unless you're afraid to trust yourself with me."

"Well," Sara smiled, "if you put it that way, let's go!"

A rain storm descended on the city as they started. The night grew dark and the streets slippery. Cramer had to give his undivided attention to the car. It was not until he was out of the city traffic, that he dared to engage in conversation.

"Beryl will be so disappointed if you fail to attend her party," said Sara, "and I'll be to blame for it."

"Again, why not think of your own claim to protection," he urged. "I'll be back in time for that, all right."

He was experiencing a thrill of satisfaction that he was alone with her in his small car, quite shut off from the rest of the world, by the wind and the rain and the night.

"Sara," he said softly admonitory, "why shouldn't I look after your comfort? Don't I constantly see you doing the most beautiful, self-effacing things? It's your speech that seems cold and hard, and sometimes, a bit cruel."

"I know it," she confessed. "I am lots worse with you than I am with any one else!"

"With me? Why, my dear girl, what have I to do with it?"

"You are too good. You'd like to wrap every one around with your own halo."

He smiled complacently. "Alas! I have no halo. I must deny any superiority over anyone else. Hadn't the run out been short! Here's Cherry Lane right here."

To Sara Leavitt, who had missed so many of the so-called pleasures of life during the past years, the drive home through the night with the man she would choose above all others, was thrilling, something to be stored away in her heart to help over the lonely times ahead. She had enjoyed every minute of the drive out from the city, she had enjoyed the afternoon with her Uncle and Aunt in their beautiful home and also seeing the fashionable attire of their guests that thronged the house.

"Never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you," he reminded her. "What were we talking about? Oh, yes. You said I had a halo about me. You know it's very wrong to laugh at people?"

"I never laugh at them unless I like them a bit," she confessed.

For a second her teasing eyes met his in frank challenge. He brought the car to stop in front of the farm house. In that second he threw discretion to the wind.

"My darling Sara!" he cried. "You must know I have fallen in love with you. Ever since that afternoon in the Glen. No, don't laugh, please, I am not joking."

"Yes, you are!" she said, opening the car door. "We are both silly! I won't sit here unless we can talk about something sensible."

"But I tell you I am serious! I care more for you than I have ever cared for anyone. And, in spite of the way you evade me, I believe you care."

"Of course I care," she said abruptly. "We all do—Hedda and Nat and I. You've been a wonderful friend!"

"But I want to be more than a friend. You must believe me, Sara, when I tell you I'm in love with you."

"You are not!" she said almost savagely. "I won't have it. Do you understand?"

"But my dear Sara, that is absurd. Unless there is some one else?"

"There is no one else."

He gasped with relief. "Then all I ask is a chance to win you. You will allow me that?"

"I can't be won," she said, and her voice sounded weak and unfamiliar. "I just want to be left alone," and from the catch in her voice he knew she was crying.

Never had anything in his life stirred him more than Sara Leavitt's tears. They were so unexpected, so unexplainable.

"Why my darling girl," he began, trying to draw her to him. She repulsed him sharply.

"No! No! Neil Cramer I mean what I say. You must promise me this minute that you will never speak of this again!"

Her face, looking strangely white and agitated in the dusk, was almost on a level with his own, and he was awed at the seriousness of her eyes and voice.

"But I don't understand, I—"

"Sara," Lois called from the porch. "Grandmother has been calling for you all evening."

Sara flung open the car door and without a word of farewell stepped out around to the porch steps. In a minute he heard the front door close and felt the end of the world had come as far as he was concerned.

Beryl Johnson had to use many arguments to induce Hedda to go home with her.

"But, Beryl," Hedda argued. "I haven't a single dress fit for the dolgs at your home-to-night. This dress I have on is the best I have."

"Why Hedda, darling," Beryl coaxed, "I have loads of frocks, hanging in my wardrobe. Half of them are too trying for me but will just suit your blond prettiness."

Hedda Leavitt always enjoyed a visit to Beryl's beautiful home. Presently Beryl brought an armful of gowns for her to choose from.

A small dinner was to precede the dance, and all sorts of ideas for Hedda's pleasure had been fermenting in Beryl's brain all the afternoon.

"I want you to be simply stunning this evening. And, here's the way to do it—wear this!"

Two Kinds Of Blue

Two Kinds Of Blue

I saw a pretty blue bird,
Why did he look so blue?
Thrilling the air with melody,
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw a skylark singing,
Up in the blue, blue, blue,
Why does it look so cheery,
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw an Irish Robby,
Warbling the rainy blue,
What was he trying to convey?
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw the hermit thrush resounding,
The hollow wood's deep blue,
Why he lonesome the solitude,
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw the song birds Jesus Land,
Where the Romans spread the blue,
Why not his sweet voice of love,
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw a Bridgroom down the aisle,
Why did he wear the blue?
His bride all hopes and smiles,
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw the Yankee cross the briny,
With the Red, White and Blue,
What did he do for the U. S. A.?
I'd tell you if I knew.

I saw the Golden wreck the World,
Nor its dark and blue,
I wonder if they're satisfied?
I'd tell you if I knew.

Note—

The Nightingale sings in the night,
The Little Redbird in the rain,
Each sees well God's part,
Till the Sun Burns blue again.
—Michael Wolfe O'Sullivan.
(Copyright, 1931)

Prefer Charges Against Pastor, Friend of Klan

Presbyterians of Bedford Village Elect Ten Commissioners To Take Charges Before Westchester Presbytery

Bedford Village, N. Y., July 10.—The Rev. Archibald Fulton, pastor of the 250-year-old Presbyterian Church in this village, is the only Protestant church in the village—built a raft in his hair when he paraded the Ku Klux Klan to visit his church last March, present him an American flag and make speeches. The raft is filled with troubles now, for on Monday night this week a large delegation of church members held a meeting and elected 10 commissioners to present charges against the pastor before the next meeting of the Westchester Presbytery.

The commissioners, Mr. Fulton found their investigation of the members of the congregation, and presented his invitation to persons of all creeds to attend the meeting. They charged that he was endeavoring to make the church a sectarian church.

Prisoners Pay Chaplain's Way Over To Europe

Columbus, July 10.—The Rev. Albert E. O'Brien, D. D., Catholic chaplain at the Ohio State Penitentiary, has been elected to the position of chaplain of the United States Army and Navy. He has been in the service of the United States Army since 1911. He is the son of a prominent family in Columbus, Ohio.

Half the Patients in Catholic Hospitals Are Non-Catholics

First Survey Ever Made Shows Popularity of Catholic Institutions With People Outside of the Church—New Surgical Code is Helpful

St. Paul, Minn., July 10.—At the recent annual convention of the Catholic Hospital Association of the United States and Canada, held at the College of St. Thomas here, reliable data on the percentage of non-Catholic patients served by Catholic institutions were available for the first time as a result of an investigation last year in which 408 hospitals out of 865 replied to a questionnaire, representing about two-thirds of the Catholic hospitals. In 311 of the institutions replying, 402,851 non-Catholic patients were treated in 1930. That is, 51 per cent of the patients were non-Catholics.

The necessity for raising the standards in nursing education, more practical and the formation of a national code of ethics for Catholic institutions were emphasized in the presidential address of the Rev. Alphonsus M. Schwitalla, S. J., of St. Louis, at the opening of the convention.

Mass Composed By Palestrina Published Now

First Volume of Monumental Music Work, With Treasures of Past Centuries, is Presented to the Pope

Vatican City, July 10.—Members of the Academic College of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music visited Pope Pius XI the other day, and presented to him the first volume of "Monumenta Polyphonice Italice," the monumental work on which the institution is now at work. The volume contains, among other treasures, a hitherto unpublished mass of twelve voices in three choirs, composed by Palestrina in collaboration with his best pupils. This treasure, the existence of which had been forgotten, was found in the archives of the Musical Chapel of the Basilica of St. John Lateran.

The Pope expressed high approval of the publication, urging the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music to persevere in its work. He dictated the Latin motto, "Nil in altum a quid agendum" (Nothing does if something remains to be done).

It is intended that this work should be a complete collection of all the musical treasures of the fifteenth, sixteenth and following centuries, preserved in the musical archives not only of Roman basilicas but also in other churches and cultural institutions of Italy.

Thongs Cheer For Pope Pius At Lille, France

Lille, France, July 10.—One hundred fifty thousand Catholics cheered loudly for Pope Pius Sunday in connection with the reading of the Pope's encyclical on the Italian troubles at the concluding Mass of the Eucharistic Congress.

During the morning, which was conducted outdoors, Magr. Desnoes, apostolic protonotary, transmitted the Pope's plea that all those present pray for his intention in the moment of extreme gravity for the church's future. Four cardinals and 69 bishops were in the assembly.

Artist Enjoys Having Cardinal Sit for Portrait

New York, July 10.—Charles Hood Williams, portrait painter of Chicago, has been painting a portrait of Cardinal Hayes of New York. He has enjoyed the work immensely. "I had a wonderful time," he said the other day as he prepared to return to Chicago. "His kindness is one of the most interesting men I have ever met. A great conversationalist, a wonderful story-teller, amazing in his simplicity, at times he actually made me forget what we were about."

The artist said he could give no better summary of his impressions of the abled church dignitary than to endorse the characterization of his eminence's personal physician, Dr. Sullivan, who described him as "the per cent kindness and goodness."

It was something of those human qualities of the prelate, which Mr. Williams strove to put on canvas. "My aim was to paint the man, rather than the prelate," he said.

Noted Jesuit Dies

New Orleans, La., July 10.—The Rev. Father Daniel Patrick Lawton, 72, librarian at Spring Hill College, Mobile, Ala., and widely known Jesuit educator, was found dead on July 4, the victim of a heart attack.

He who truly loves his neighbor and cannot efficaciously assist him should strive at least to relieve and help him by his prayers.

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