



A New Romance of the Storm Country

(Continued from last week.)

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Lonely and almost friendless, Tonnibel Devon, living on a canal boat, child of a brutal father and a worn-out, discouraged mother, wanders into a Salvation Army hall at Ithaca, N. Y. There she meets a young Salvation army captain, Phillip MacCauley.

CHAPTER II.—Uriah Devon, Tony's father, returns to the boat from a protracted "sneeze," and announces he has arranged for Tony to marry a worthless companion of his, Reginald Brown. Mrs. Devon objects, and Uriah beats her. She intimates there is a secret connected with Tonnibel.

CHAPTER III.—In clothes that Uriah has brought Tony finds a baby's picture with a notification of a reward for its return to a Doctor Pendlehaven. She goes to return the picture.

CHAPTER IV.—With the Pendlehavens, a family of wealth, live Mrs. Curtis, a cousin, her son, and daughter, Katherine Curtis and Reginald Brown. Katherine is deeply in love with Phillip MacCauley.

CHAPTER V.—Tonnibel returns the picture to Doctor John, and learns it belongs to his brother, Dr. Paul Pendlehaven. It is a portrait of Doctor Paul's child, who had been stolen in her infancy, and her loss has wrecked Doctor Paul's life. Doctor John goes with Tony to the canal boat and ministers to Mrs. Devon while she is unconscious.

CHAPTER VI.—Returning to consciousness, Mrs. Devon is informed by Tony of her visitor. She is deeply agitated, makes Tony swear she will never tell of Devon's brutality, and disappears.

CHAPTER VII.—Tony's personality and her loneliness appeal to Doctor John and he arranges to take her into his house as a companion to his invalid brother.

CHAPTER VIII.—Tony's presence in the house has a good effect on Doctor Paul. He begins to take a new interest in life. Visiting the canal boat, Tony finds Reginald Brown there. He attempts to kiss her. Captain MacCauley appears and throws the man into the lake. Uriah Devon orders MacCauley off his boat.

Then he called softly: "Tony—little Tony." The girl stirred and lifted her head. "Yes," she sighed, "I'm here." "Come out," said Phillip, leaning over and taking hold of her arm. "There's a child, don't shake so. You're safe here with me, and I suppose they think you're drowned by this time. Can't you step out, dear?" She was trembling, so he had to pick her up and lift her out in his arms. Then he carried her under an overhanging rock and placed her on the sand.

Through many sobs and tears, she told him all that had happened on the canal boat, and that her father had said her mother was dead. And so touched was Phillip MacCauley, he felt the tears rim his own lashes. For a long time, in fact until the rain ceased to beat upon the rocks and shore, they stayed under cover. Most of the time they were silent, most of the time Phillip held the curly head against his breast. When the dawn began to break Tonnibel roused herself.

"I'm goin' away now," she said. "I've got to go to my friends. And I can't tell you just how much I'm thankin' you." "But if I let you go," protested Phillip, "I'll never see you again. Oh, don't do that. Tony, I couldn't stand it now!" "I couldn't, either," she said under her breath. "I'll be comin' back here to this hole some day."

"When?" asked Phillip, eagerly. "Today?" Tonnibel shook her head. "Nope," she replied wearily. "I'm dead beat out."

"And I forgot that," cried the boy. "Tony, darling, will you—will you kiss me before you go?" Two arms shot out and clasped around his neck. Two eager lips met his in such passionate abandon that for a long time after Tony and Gussie had gone away toward the boulevard Phillip MacCauley lay face downward on the shore, the sun peeping at him from the eastern hill.

Paul Pendlehaven lay wide awake in his bed, his sunken eyes filled with darkened sorrow. His brother had stayed with him the most of the night and now sat beside him. "Will you sleep?" asked Doctor John.

"I'll try," was the response. "I could if I knew where she was." Doctor John reached over and took his brother's thin hand.

"The morning may bring her back," he said soothingly. "And Paul, old man, if you worry like this, you'll be back where you were four weeks ago."

The invalid sighed heavily. "I've grown so accustomed to her," he said in excuse, "and somehow since you told me of her people, I fear something may have happened to her."

"We'll hope for the best," said John Pendlehaven, rising. "Now if I run down for a wink or two will you lie quietly while I'm gone?" "Yes," came in a breath, and true to

his word, Paul Pendlehaven scarcely breathed for a long while after his brother went out, although his heavy gray eyes stared at the breaking dawn. If anyone had told him a month ago, he could have longed for any human being as he now longed for Tony Devon, he wouldn't have believed it. He dreaded the day without her dear smile bending over him. Perhaps she would never come back. At that thought he groaned.

If he could only go to sleep. Only close his eyes— His lids sank slowly down, and he slept fitfully. Mingled in his dream of Tony Devon came a sharp sound. That, like Tony, must be a dream, too, that sound that was out of the ordinary noises of the day, for although the sun had called into life the bees and birds, Ithaca still slumbered.

The noise came again, striking against his nervous brain and waking him. Suddenly, with panting breath and beating pulses, he lifted himself on his elbow. The screen had fallen from the window and perhaps ten seconds passed as he stared mutely at it. Then like a shot from a gun, Tony Devon sprang through the window into the room. For a moment the sick man gazed at her with mingled emotions. Something dreadful had happened to her. She was so white, so wraithlike and changed, yet blotching the pallor of her face were reddish blue bruises. Then the bare feet took the distance between them in a bound. The dimples at the corners of her lips lived a moment and were gone.

When Paul Pendlehaven dropped back on the pillow, she spoke. "Me and Gussie's back," she said brokenly. "I climbed up the tree and

got to the roof, fearin' to wake up the other folks in the house." She sat down beside the bed. "Somehow I knew you'd be lookin' for me, sir."

It was because she had passed through such a dreadful night and was so terribly tired that she cried a little as a child cries after it has been cruelly punished.

Paul Pendlehaven let his thin hand drop on the frowsty head. Tears stung his own lids like nettles. "Dear child, I've waited all night for you. My God, what's happened to you?" Tony covered her face with her hands.

"Somebody beat me up," she moaned. "I can't tell anything now. And I lost my pretty clothes."

Sudden strength came to Paul Pendlehaven. He sat up straight and forcibly lifted the pitiful hurt face so he could look at it.

"Tony," he began gravely, "I command you to tell me what happened to you. Tell me instantly. If I knew, I could take steps to punish the ruffian who dared to do this thing."

That was just what Tony didn't want. Hadn't she sworn to Edith in the presence of the infinite Christ, that good Shepherd who had given up His life for His sheep, that no matter what Uriah did she wouldn't peach on him?

The tears were still rolling down her cheeks from under lowered lids. "You have so helped me, Tony," continued Pendlehaven, "and yet you refuse to let me do what I can."

She tried to think of something to comfort him. "But sometimes daddies and husbands beat their women folks," she explained.

"Then your father whipped you?" quizzed the doctor. "That I can't tell," said the girl. "Don't make me. Oh, Lordy, I'm all tuckered out."

It was of no use to put questions any more, thought Pendlehaven. He was persuaded that her father had done this dreadful thing.

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Tony, too, began to lose the high spirits that had returned almost immediately after her escape from the canal boat. The gray eyes grew dark-

ly circled, the lovely mouth seemed to have lost the power to smile.

Paul Pendlehaven noted all this with apprehension. He questioned the girl time after time, asking her if she felt well, if there was anything she wanted, but she always replied in the negative.

One day after they had had their dinner, he sat looking at her curiously. She was close to the window reading a book, when he caused her to look up by calling her name.

"Run downstairs, Tony dear," he went on, "and tell my brother to come up here before office hours, will you, honey?"

The girl rose, laying aside her book. She dreaded venturing into Mrs. Curtis' presence and shivered when she remembered the critical Katherine who looked her over with supercilious toleration whenever they happened to meet. But she made no complaint and went slowly downstairs.

The dining room door was closed, but the sound of voices from within told her the family was at dinner. She opened the door slowly and stepped inside. For one moment her vision was obscured by the light that suddenly took possession of her. As the blur cleared from her eyes, she saw John Pendlehaven smiling at her. Then a sharp ejaculation from some one else swung her gaze from the doctor's face, and it settled on—Phillip MacCauley.

She went extremely pale and put out her hand to grasp something for support as if she were going to fall. She saw him rise up slowly, an expression of amazement and relief going across his face. She smiled, but what a weary little smile it was and how full of pleading, as if she were silently begging him to forgive her for some deed she'd done.

John Pendlehaven gazed at the two young people, and then he too got to his feet. "Phillip," he said abruptly, "this is Tonnibel Devon. She's Paul's companion. We have—"

Phillip interrupted the speaker by his sudden bound around the table. "Tony Devon, little Tony," he cried. "I thought, oh, I thought you were dead. I thought I'd lost you forever."

A noise fell from Katherine's lips, and Mrs. Curtis stumbled to her feet. "So you know her too, Phillip," she snarled with a hasty glance at her pallid daughter. "I thought we'd kept her well out of your way. So you've played the sneak while eating bread and butter in my house, miss," she blurted at Tony. "Well, it's what one might have expected of you, mother darling."

"He won't while Paul lives," sighed Mrs. Curtis. "I don't know just what to do. I've thought of every conceivable way to get that girl out of the house, and John forestalls me every time."

"I'm glad Phillip hasn't seen her," remarked Katherine. "He's just the religious maudlin kind who would fall for an appealing face like hers. Mrs. Curtis made an impatient gesture, and Katherine proceeded. "We can't deny she is appealing, mamma, even if we hate her! And God knows I loathe her so I could strangle her with these two hands." She held up clenched fingers, then relaxed them and laughed bitterly. "Heavens! What's the use of butting our heads against a stone wall? . . . Give me a cigarette, my dear Sarah. Phillip won't be here until night, and I can get rid of the odor before that."

Meanwhile upstairs Tony Devon was fast getting back to her normal self. The blessed assurance she had that she was needed by her sick friend lifted her spirits. She grieved inwardly for her mother, but shuddered when she thought of her father. Now all ties were cut between them. She had no doubt but that both Uriah and Reggie thought she was dead in the lake. She hoped they did! She'd never see either one of them again.

She was sitting thinking deeply when Paul Pendlehaven spoke to her. "Little dear," said he, reaching out his hand toward her, "come over a minute. I want to talk to you!"

Tonnibel went to him instantly, as she always did when he called her. "You will promise me something," he insisted, as his hot hand clasped hers. "Tony, don't go out again like you did yesterday. I shan't be able to stand it if you do!"

Tonnibel's mind flashed to Phillip. She felt sure he would go to the corner of the lake every day to meet her, as he had gone to the canal boat.

Yet as she gazed into the imploring eyes of her friend, she had no heart to deny him his wish.

"I'm selfish, perhaps," the man went on, "but, Tony dear, if you want to go out, there's lots of cars in the garage, and horses in the stable. Won't you promise me?"

Tony thrust the memory of Phillip's face from her mind. She put the wish to be in his arms again, to feel his warm lips once more on hers behind her, and tremblingly smiled in acquiescence.

"I promise," she said in a low voice, but a sob prevented her from saying anything more.

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(Continued next week.)

Railway Contract Goes to Germany. The Rhodesian railways recently gave a contract for 100 all-steel, high-sided bogie wagons to a London agent, representing several German railway rolling-stock manufacturers. A large order for railway carriage and wagon tires required by the Egyptian state railways has also recently been placed in Germany. The Egyptian Delta Light Railways, a British company, have also been in negotiations with German manufacturers for the supply of 260 bogie wagons, but have now decided to defer action until April next in anticipation of them being able to take advantage of the prospective fall in prices. Meanwhile, a large contract for wagon wheels and axles has already been placed by this railway company with Germany.

If you see it in the "Watchman" it's true.