

# The Second Promise

By HOWARD FIELDING.

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## CHAPTER I.

Perfumes appeal to the memory in an extraordinary degree. This is sound scientific doctrine, and it is true, besides. Take that old glove out of its casket, my venerable and lonely friend. You may look upon it with a steady eye, perhaps; but if there linger in it the fragrance of the hand it held so long ago, you dare not raise it to your lips and say you have forgotten.

The sighs of spring delight us for their promise, but their scent is not so strong as the perfume of the past. To Arthur Lynde, stretched upon his couch by the open window, the breath of early June came laden with more than a single season's sweetness—the fragrance of blossoms that had grown to fruit, and ripened, and fallen to the ground, and he had been quite ill, so that he lay in bed while the spirit of the springtime beckoned to him from outside the window, and he could not go. It was hard to wait for returning health, and sometimes he became desperately impatient, taxing the ingenuity of his mind to amuse him, but not her love to bear with him.

There was a canary in the cage in his room. His mother had given him the bird, and he felt most tenderly toward it. He had never before in captivity seen a bird so free, and he felt most tenderly toward it. He had never before in captivity seen a bird so free, and he felt most tenderly toward it. He had never before in captivity seen a bird so free, and he felt most tenderly toward it.

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run away and play, little girl, with a light heart."

She would not permit her to speak seriously any more. She forced her to leave him, and promise that she would go out into the air. Presently he saw her in the garden whence she threw a kiss to him.

A little later she was in earnest conference across the garden fence with a big, good-looking young fellow who was ridiculously encumbered by a great variety of bundles and boxes. Lynde recognized him as Walter Carroll, a great swell in college athletics up to his graduation a year before.

He passed on and directly Mrs. Lynde ran breathlessly into her husband's room.

"Arthur," she said, "if you really mean it—"

He turned pale and then laughed.

"Upon my word, you startled me," he cried. "Walter is a very fascinating young man, and—"

"Now, don't be absurd any more. What I want to know is whether you were in earnest about not caring to—"

"I love you," she sobbed.

"You play me at this moment, but love me you cannot. Hereafter, when both of us are freed from the limitations of the flesh, it may be possible. But in this world, encumbered by these mortal bodies, love means life and health. It is reciprocal. It is sentimental inspired by nature for her own purposes, and terminable at her pleasure. No human will can summon it or hold it. Am I the same to you as I was? Does your heart leap at the sound of my voice and tremble at a caress? I would not have it so. It would be unnatural, monstrous."

She tried very hard to turn him from his gloomy and desperate trend of thought.

"I am waiting," she said, "till you are well again."

"Dear little girl," he said gently, "I shall never be well. And now let's see what's to be done about it. I have spoken too bitterly, and have frightened you. And yet it is my wish to make you happy. Listen! I want you to go out into the world, and live your life."

"What! Go away from you?"

"Now, don't be frightened. Of course you'll live here, and run into this cage of mine whenever you wish to have a look at me. I'll always be glad to see you. But don't ever think that you must come. Go out into society, and have people come here if they can stand it, knowing that my body's in the house. Get your old friends back again, and make new ones, both men and women. Dance, and play tennis, and ride in the park as you used to do. Spend a lot of money. There's plenty of it. I only wish I could help you do all these things, but as I can't, you must do them twice as hard. And every time a gloomy thought of me comes over you, say to yourself: 'I'm doing what he wants me to do. I'm doing what will make him the happiest.' And if you fall in love—"

"Arthur!"

"Now, little girl, let's be reasonable. I've proven to you that you can't love me. And love comes when you least expect it. Suppose, just for the sake of the contract we're to make, that you really do find some handsome and agreeable fellow who very naturally has forgotten that I am alive, and proceeds on the theory that I am not; and suppose, further, that you find yourself thinking of him often, and that it is really necessary, will you promise to come to me and tell me all about it? That's the contract."

"You always make me cry," she said.

"If you would only be more cheerful!"

"As to that," he replied, "I have a plan. It is impossible for me to be cheerful, but why should my gloom envelop you? It has done so, for nearly a year, since this illness came upon me. Every day you have brought the light of your presence to me, dear little wife, and God knows I am unspeakably grateful. But I am not so selfish as to permit this to continue. This room has been a prison to you as it has to me. I am going to open the door."

She looked at him uneasily. How had she shown him that she felt herself a prisoner?

"You have tried to do too much," he said, "and the inevitable consequence has come. It is all my fault. My selfishness was very short-sighted. I had been wise enough at first to regulate your self-sacrifice, I might not now be the burden upon you that I am. You have read to me, talked to me, sung to me, and have been my consolation by day and by night. But what have I been to you? A sorrow and a—"

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government of the United States. I carry no mail."

James Payn tells of an English gentleman who objected to Christmas "waits." On one occasion, on being called upon the next day by the persons who had awakened him with carols on the previous night, he inquired their business.

"Well, sir," was the modest rejoinder, "we are the waits."

"I am not surprised," was the unexpected reply.

"We are come," they continued, "for the usual gratuity."

"I did hope," he said, with quiet dignity and a pity for human nature in his tone, "that you had come to apologize."

"SLEPT ON THE FLOOR."

This Was the Informal Custom of the Ancients.

The ancient slept on the floor or on a divan covered with skins. During the Middle Ages beds were made of rushes, heather or straw. It is believed that leather beds were known to the Romans, since a mention in one of the poets of men so luxurious that they slept on feathers is supposed to refer to this kind of bed. Hellogabalus had an air mattress and an air mattress, 218 or 222 A. D.

Feather beds were employed by the better classes in England during the days of Henry VIII, though they were considered luxurious and were expensive. The bedsteads of the Egyptians, Romans and Greeks closely resembled our couches. The Russian peasants place their beds on top of the family oven for the sake of the warmth given forth by the fire. To the present day bedsteads in Holland and some parts of Germany are fitted up with two feather beds, on one of which the sleeper lies, while the other is used for covering.

Mothers! Mothers! Mothers!!! Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over fifty years by millions of mothers for their children while teething, with perfect success. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain; cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for diarrhea. Sold by druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," and take no other kind. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

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## What is

# CASTORIA

Castoria is Dr. Samuel Pitcher's prescription for Infants and Children. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. It is a harmless substitute for Paregoric, Drops, Soothing Syrup, and Castor Oil. It is Pleasant. Its guarantee is thirty years' use by Millions of Mothers. Castoria destroys Worms and allays feverishness. Castoria prevents vomiting Sour Curd, cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. Castoria relieves teething troubles, cures constipation and flatulency. Castoria assimilates the food, regulates the stomach and bowels, giving healthy and natural sleep. Castoria is the Children's Panacea—the Mother's Friend.