

varicator of the worst sort. You see, she was a natural interrogation point, was the Queen, and she wanted to know every little detail of my life, since I had left Montreal, or, rather, since Carrots had (she was extraordinarily interested in Carrots); and since I was ashamed to admit that nothing at all had happened, save that I had managed to plug through the High, and had graduated as an M. A. from old McGill, I was forced to resort to my imagination for a series of thrilling experiences which I thought would appeal to her, and might possibly win her.

With what results I have told you. the Queen was mortally offended, and put a nasty and dangerous barrier between us—her sunshade. It reached just to my eyes, and there was peril in the way she handled it. I looked under the parasol. The Queen's great eyes were moist, her lips were quivering.

All my banter shriveled down in a moment. I forgot myself, and "Carrots" I called her, knocked the parasol down, and forcibly took her in my arms. A few minutes after, I was alone in the road, and my face was stinging where a sharp little hand had fiercely chastised me.

I did not see the Queen for three whole days after this. My feelings were in a turmoil. I had ardently hoped to meet her before that beautiful red mark had disappeared from my countenance; for I knew the Queen had a weakness, and I hoped to touch it, and at least win from her something akin to pity, which is akin to something else, you know. As it happened, however, every vestige of the mark was gone when I finally did see her again.

She was flirting outrageously with a certain George Manners, for whom I had conceived a violent and unconquerable hatred. The way that girl carried on with him was enough to drive a fellow to—well, flirt desperately with Kate Seymour, for instance, and this I proceeded forthwith to do. Kate aided and abetted me. So did the whole family. So I paid court to her when the Queen was about, and the Queen, with cheeks flaming red and great, glistening eyes, pretended not to see; but I knew better. Then a terrible thing happened.

One day when I called at the Seymour house I found everything in an uproar. The Queen had mysteriously disappeared. Her room was found in great disorder, and on the bed, which had not been slept in overnight, a short little note was discovered. Miss Seymour showed it to me, just as if I was one of the family, as I fancy she thought I was likely to become.

Good by. I am gone, you perceive. It doesn't matter to you where.

This was all there was to it.

I was so stunned and dazed, I became absolutely daffy, and at that moment an agony equivalent only to that I had suffered when Carrots had left me, only keener and more bitter and unavailing, surged through me. I had some queer things to say to Miss Kate Seymour—things she had never expected. She said she had never dreamed of my attachment for her cousin. She was very sorry. I wondered cynically to myself what she meant by that last sentence. Somehow, unreasonably perhaps, I was holding her responsible for the Queen's loss.

III.

THE THIRD—LA CARA.

The third time I fell in love it was with a French opera singer. At least, that is what they said she was. Her name was "La Cara." Paris had gone mad over a woman's voice and a woman's beauty. One night I joined a party of friends, and went with them to hear her. It was gala night, and only full dress was allowed to enter the doors of the great opera house. Our party, which was made up entirely of men, were discussing the new diva, and quite eagerly awaiting her appearance. All but myself had already heard her; hence my indifference. I sat back in my seat and quietly studied the house, musing over the extravagant amount of paint and powder used by the French women, the jewels of the Americans, and the large display of neck and shoulders of the English women.

I was tired of the opera, sick to death of Paris. The sea of faces, the surging murmur of voices, rang in my ears and roused in me a longing that was almost madness for the surging of the waters