

## THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE SHE LOVED MUCH

Chapter CXXIX.

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As we drove up to the place where Eliene was going to find her babies I noticed the undertaker's wagon before the door and, swinging from the knob, was a great bunch of white roses tied with purple ribbons.

The thought of poor Eliene going in there to take those children home to her own barren arms, children whose father had wronged both her and the girl who was lying cold and still in the plain coffin in the front room, was inexpressibly appalling.

Eliene had said nothing about Harry or how she felt toward him. I wondered if she could still care for him in the least. It did not seem to me that I could endure the sight of a man who had wronged me in this fashion. I thought of the last evening we had dinner with the Symones and how care free Harry Symone seemed and with what audacity he even tried to flirt with me, and at that moment he must have known that the poor little woman up here was awaiting her hour of agony alone. I wondered if all men are like this. Can they forget all that they wish to forget and be happy, without a thought of the woman they have sacrificed to their selfish pleasure?

Eliene and I went into the bedroom where the two little red atoms that did not look like anything human lay. Eliene took them both in her arms, and her face became transfigured with a maternal love, and all the grief and hurt went out of it. There is her joy, her comfort, her consolation, I thought, and, after seeing her thus, I never for one moment thought that her way of disposing of this matter was any other than right.

While she was engrossed with the children and talking with the trained nurse over the best way to take them

home with her I slipped into the other room where the dead mother lay.

The mysterious smile of eternal knowledge was on the thin face, but the lines of pain had not yet all gone from it. In some way I fancied that she was glad to die and it seemed to me that she must know of that other woman in the other room ready and willing to "mother" her babies.

"They will have the care of their own father," I whispered as I laid my hand on the cold one's clasped hands across her breast. Just then Eliene called me and I went in to witness the legal adoption of the children.

The old father of the girl came up after the papers were signed and took Eliene's hand. "You're a good woman, Mrs. Symone, and I'm glad my girl's babies are yours to keep. It's not many's the woman that would do what you have this day, but the blessed mother will reward ye always."

"I'll take the same care of them as though they were born of my flesh," said Eliene solemnly.

Not one word was said about Harry, and it was arranged that, under the cover of darkness, the babies were to be taken to Eliene's home.

As we got into the car, Eliene said almost to herself: "I must hurry home now and decide what I shall say to Harry."

I looked at her in surprise; gone was the indecisive, the bored look I had always seen upon her face and, while I knew she was suffering agony, yet I also knew that, for the first time in her luxurious, useless life, she had begun to live.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

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The Countess of Warwick will not wear furs nor feathers, with the single exception of ostrich feathers.

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A man with money to burn should never use anything but safety matches.