

Tomorrow's Promise

By Temple Baile

continued

She dismounted, crossed the road and knelt beside the prostrate figure. "It's Anne," she said simply, and was rewarded by a fleeting smile.

"You know him?" There was amazement in David's voice. "Garry and I met him last night in the meadow."

There was a movement of the still figure, a quiet voice speaking. "My name is Charles—Charles Patterson."

Anne saw a quick flash from David to her mother. "Charles Patterson of Cecil?" David asked.

"Yes."

"Of course. I met you once years ago, but I haven't seen you since."

"I've lived abroad a lot." He winched as David tried to lift his head. "I think my arm is—broken."

"We're going to get you up to Mrs. Ordway's."

The blue eyes met Anne's. "Your mother's?"

"Yes."

David was giving orders to Garry. "You'd better ride across country and telephone the doctor. Tell him to come at once to the Ordways."

Garry stopped long enough to ask Elinor. "Who are the Pattersons of Cecil?"

"My dear boy, they are everything that is old and entrenched."

"Oh, well. I'll bet he's a black sheep," and Garry went off with a last furtive look at Anne.

The shabby boy proved to be strong and resourceful, and with David's help got Charles into the car. David sat beside him and the boy drove. Elinor and Anne followed on their horses, leading David's mare.

As they rode along Elinor said, "So that's Charles Patterson! Have you been reading about him in the papers?"

"No."

"His wife is getting a divorce. It's created a great sensation. She charges him with cruelty and desertion and the sympathy, it appears, is all on her side."

"Why?"

"Oh, a man like that! Rich and good looking. The chances are that he's found somebody else."

"Why should you think he has found somebody else?" Anne faltered.

"Well, men do. It's a man's world, Anne."

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"I think it is dreadful, Mother," she answered.

"What is dreadful?"

"People who have loved each other not loving any more."

Charles Patterson, racked with pain, was glad of the drug that dulled his senses. He slept for three hours after his arm was set and waked to find himself in a big old-fashioned room, and by his side a young woman in white linen.

"I'm Vicky," she said.

"My nurse?"

"Anne's nurse and companion, and the family prop. You see, since Anne's grown up, my original occupation is gone. So I am glad to have an invalid on my hands."

"Yes."

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