

# Cap'n Warren's Wards

by JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

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## CHAPTER XVII.—Continued.

Caroline, crimson with mortification, protested indignantly.

"Mr. Sylvester," she said, "it is not necessary to say—"

"Excuse me," her own tone was sharper and more stern—"I think it is. Go on, Sylvester."

The lawyer looked far from comfortable, but he spoke at once and to the point.

"I should have told you and your son just this, Mrs. Dunn," he said, "I intended it before, and Miss Warren had already written you the essential facts. A new and unexpected development, the nature of which I am not at liberty to disclose now or later, makes Abigail Warren's estate absolutely bankrupt—not only that, but many thousands of dollars in debt. Its heirs are left penniless."

It was blunt, beyond doubt. Even Captain Elisha winced at the word "penniless." Caroline, saying, put a hand on the table to steady herself.

"Thank you, Mr. Sylvester," said the captain quietly. "I'll see you again in a few moments."

The lawyer bowed and left the room, evidently glad to escape. Captain Elisha turned to Mrs. Dunn.

"What do you mean?" he observed, "that part of the business is over. My niece is a poor girl. She needs somebody to support her and look out for her. She's got that somebody, we're thankful to say. She's engaged to Mr. Malcom. I understand from Steve that Malcom's been mighty anxious to have the wedding day hurried along. I can't say as I blame him. And I think the sooner they're married the better. Now, how soon can we make it, Mrs. Dunn?"

Caroline gazed at her guardian in horrified amazement. "Way," she cried, "what do you mean by such?"

"Don't be an idiot, Caro," cut in her brother. "I told you to be sensible. Steve Warren's dead right?"

"Steve, you stay out of this," there was no misunderstanding the captain's tone. "When I want your opinion I'll ask for it. And, Caroline, I want you to stay out too. This is my trick at the wheel. Mrs. Dunn, what do you say? Never mind the young folks. You and me know that marriage is business, same as everything else. How soon can we have the wedding?"

Mrs. Dunn had apparently nothing to say to him. She addressed her next remark to Caroline.

"My dear," she said, in great agitation, "this is really too dreadful. This guardian of yours appears to think he is in some barbarous country—savages about. Come, Malcom, take her away."

"No," Captain Elisha stepped in front of the door. "She ain't gone and I'd rather you wouldn't go yet. Let's settle this up now. Well, Mr. Dunn," turning to the groom to be, "you're one of the interested parties—what do you say?"

Malcom ground his heel into the rug. "I don't consider it your business," he declared.

"No, no, I think it's my business, and business is just what it is. There's a business contract between you and my niece. We want to know how soon it can be carried out, that's all."

The young man looked desperately at the door but the captain's broad shoulders blocked the way toward it. He hesitated, scowled, and then, with a shrug of his shoulders, surrendered.

"How can I marry?" he demanded suddenly. "Confound it! My salary isn't large enough to pay my own way decently."

"Malcom!" cried his mother warningly.

"Well, mister, what the devil's the use of all this? You know—By Jove, you ought to!"

"Hold on, young feller! I don't understand. Your wages ain't large enough, you say? What do you mean? You was going to be married, wasn't you? Caroline, don't you say a word. You say—you're addressing Malcom!"

"You can't support a wife on your wages. You could scrape along, couldn't you? Hey? Couldn't you?"

Malcom's answer was another scornful shrug. "You belong on Cape Cod," he sneered. "Mister, let's get out of this."

"Wait! Put it plain now. Do I understand that you calculate to break the engagement because my niece has lost her living?"

"This is ridiculous," Mrs. Dunn proclaimed. "Bribery same person knows, though barbarians may not—with a venous glare at the captain "that in engagement of the kind Malcom's son has shared a certain amount of—er—financial—er—that is, the bride is supposed to have some money. It is expected. Of course it is! Love in a cottage—well, a bit passed. My dear, I pity your niece from the bottom of my heart, but—there! Under the circumstances the whole affair be-

comes impossible. Caroline, my dear, I'm dreadfully sorry, dreadfully! I love you like my own child. And poor Malcom will be heartbroken—but you see."

Stephen who had been fuming and repressing his rage with difficulty during the scene, leaped forward with brandished fist.

"By gad," he shouted. "Mal Dunn, you call!"

His uncle pushed him back with a sweep of his arm.

"Steve," he ordered, "I'm running this ship." He gave a quick glance at his niece and then, speaking rapidly and addressing the head of the Dunn family, "I see, ma'am. Yes, yes, I see. Well, you've forgot one thing, I guess. If there's nothing in marriage but love, then an engagement is something I just called it a business contract, and it can't be broke without the consent of both sides. You wanted Caroline's money, maybe she wants me. If she does, then there's such a thing as, law, why, perhaps she can get it."

"That's the talk!" cried Stephen, exultingly.

"Step," Caroline cried wildly. "Oh, stop! Do you think—do you suppose I would marry him now—now, after I've seen what he is? Oh," with a shudder of disgust, "when I think of it, I might have done it. Thank God that the money has gone! I'm glad I'm poor! I'm glad I never want to hear of him or think of him again. Please, please let me go! Oh, take me home!"

"Captain Warren, please, let me go home!"

Her uncle was at her side in a moment. "Yes, yes, dearie," he said, "I'll take you home. Don't give way now!"

He would have taken her arm, but she shrunk from him.

"Not you," she begged. "Steve!"

"Of course—Steve," he agreed.

"Steve, take your sister home. Mr. Sylvester's got a carriage waiting, and he'll go with you, I don't doubt. Do as I tell you, boy—and behave yourself. Don't wait; go!"

He held the door open until the hysterical girl and her brother had departed. Then he turned to the Dunn family.

"Well, ma'am," he said dryly, "I don't know's there's anything more to be said. All the questions seem to be settled. Our acquaintance wasn't so awful long, but it was interesting. Kuwini' you has been, and the feller said, a liberal education. Don't let me keep you any longer. Good afternoon."

Then Mrs. Dunn belabored herself of a way to make their exit less awkward and embarrassing.

"My heart!" she said, gasping and with a clutch at her breast. "My poor heart! I fear I'm going to have one of my attacks. Malcom, your arm—quick!"

With an expression of intense but patient suffering and leaning heavily upon her son's arm she moved past Captain Elisha and from the room.

That evening the captain stood in the lower hall of the apartment house at Central Park West undecided what to do next. He wished more than any-

thing else in the world to go to his niece. He would have gone to her before—had been dying to go to soothe, to comfort, to tell her of his love—but he was afraid. His conscience troubled him. Perhaps he had been too brutal.

The elevator descended, the door of the cage opened, and Stephen himself started out. The captain caught him as he passed.

"Here, boy!" he exclaimed. "Where's the fire? Where are you bound?"

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His nephew, brought thus unexpectedly to a halt, stared at him.

"Oh, it's you!" he exclaimed. "I'm bound—I don't know where I'm bound. I'm going to the club, I guess, or somewhere. Anyhow I won't stay with her. I told her so. Silly little idiot! I'll never speak to her again. I told her so. She!"

"Here! Belay! Stop! Who are you talking about?"

"Care, of course, she!"

"You're run off and left her alone—tonight? Where is she?"

"Upstairs—and crying, I suppose. She doesn't do anything else. It's all she's good for. Selfish, romantic!"

He got no further, for Captain Elisha sent him reeling with a push and ran to the elevator.

"Eighth floor," he commanded.

The door of the apartment was not latched. Stephen, in his rage and hurry, had neglected such trifles. The captain opened it quietly and walked in.

He entered the library. Caroline was lying on the couch, her head buried in the pillows.

"Caroline, dearie," he faltered, "forgive me for coming here, won't you? I had to come. I couldn't rest tonight. I know you must feel harder than ever toward me for this afternoon's doings, but I meant it for the best. I don't know, you—don't you see? Won't you try to understand the old fellow that loves you more than all the world? Won't you try?"

"I forgive you," she repeated incredulously.

Yes, try to, dearie. Oh, if you would only believe I meant it for your good and nothing else! If you could only just trust me and come to me and let me help you. I want you, my girl. I want you!"

She leaned forward. "Do you really mean it?" she cried. "How can you after all I've done, after the way I've treated you and the things I've said to you? You can't forgive me. I hate myself. You can't forgive me! You can't!"

His answer was to hold out his arms. Another moment and she was in them, clinging to his waist sobbing, holding him fast and begging him not to leave her, to take her away; that she would work, that she would not be a burden to him—only take her home and try to thank her, for by was real and honest and the only friend she had.

And Captain Elisha, soothing her, stroking her hair and murmuring words of love and tenderness, realized that she was not so different from the girl he had loved; that there was his recompense—she would never misunderstand him again; she was his at last.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## The Rejection.

WHEN the apartment was given up and Captain Elisha and his wards moved, to the little house in Westchester county, Annie came with the old laundry work. Caroline acted as a sort of housekeeper, but willing, supervising housekeeper.

The house had been procured through the kind interest of Sylvester. Caroline took a domestic science course at a university. She could not quite understand how her uncle retained the valuable paintings of their old home.

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the boy himself had something else to propose.

"Say," he said, "I've been thinking a good deal while I've been away this last time. Now, the way I look at it, this college course of mine isn't worth while. And the kind of work I want to do doesn't need university training. I want to be down on the street, as the governor was. If this rubber company business hadn't knocked us out, I intended as soon as I was of age to take that seat of his and start in for myself. Well, that chance has gone, but I mean to get in some way, though I have to start at the foot of the ladder. Now, why can't I leave college and start now? It will be two years wasted, won't it?"

Captain Elisha seemed pleased, but he shook his head.

"How do you know you'd like it?" he asked. "You never tried."

"No, I never have, but I'll like it all right. I know I shall. It's what I've wanted to do ever since I was old enough to think of such things. Just let me start in now, right away, and I'll show you. I'll make good, you see if I don't."

That evening the captain made a definite proposal to Stephen. It was a ready-made, while not consenting to the latter's leaving college, he did consider that a trial of the work in a broker's office might be a good thing. Therefore if the young man wished he could enter the employ of a friend of Sylvester and remain during July and August.

The novel, the wonderful tale which Captain Elisha was certain would

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# WHAT CAN WE DO?

In the New England Bulletin of the American Red Cross there is a splendid review of its work during the past year from which the following is an extract under the title of "The Human Side":

"The American Red Cross recognizes that our first duty for humanity in this war is the protection of our soldiers in France. It recognizes also that this duty lies with the United States government and that the government is responsible for it. As a supplementary relief organization the Red Cross stands ready to co-operate with the government in this work, and to put its organization, money and supplies into service at the call of the American army whenever and wherever they may be needed. Fully realizing the disadvantages that are always met in a foreign country, and with the view of keeping our soldiers in touch with things American, the Red Cross begins at the point of landing in France by establishing rest stations. These rest stations, extending inland toward the camps and are located in series at junction points and railroad stations where the soldiers are required to wait for trains connected with the front. The German army invaded France, the Red Cross is giving to the needy families of these French soldiers supplies and money, according to their needs."

"When the German army invaded France, hundreds of thousands of French people were driven from their homes and are now scattered throughout the republic. These people are known as refugees. The number has increased, of course, for various reasons until now there are more than 1,000,000, embracing all classes and ages, except able-bodied men. There are approximately 500,000 refugees in Paris alone."

"The housing of these people is one of the greatest problems of the French government. The American Red Cross is co-operating with the French government in this work."

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# MORE STYLES IN SERVICE GARMENTS



Women are swarming into new activities to meet the needs of industry and to relieve men for service at the front. These war times call upon every individual to do some kind of work, exciting only the very old or the very young from active service. And women are acquiring themselves like men. They are getting down to business in uniforms scientifically designed to meet the requirements of the various kinds of work they have undertaken. So, therefore, there is no sense of fitness. Many a smart uniform proclaims that its wearer is doing her bit by discharging the duties of some woman who is "over there" on the war.

For the factory and/or garden there are overalls and service suits like those shown in the picture. They prove to be immensely convenient for work, and for outings in the woods or mountains there is nothing so comfortable and satisfactory as the service suit. For trampolining, climbing and hiking it has any outfit that includes a shirt, trousers; there is no comparison between them for convenience.

For work that does not demand breeches or bifurcated skirts there is a service suit like this except that it has a skirt. All these suits are made of Warren Jean material in khaki color. Caps and hats to match are made to be worn with them.

Smart society women who have dedicated their cars and services to the government have donned a tunic uniform for driving them. Girls who are replacing young men as ushers in the theaters are uniformed in spirited corsets and breeches suits with puttees and dashing little caps. Women serving in canteens like to be uniformed, Red Cross workers don cap and apron—erecting the service garments worn as a proud badge of duty fulfilled.

Julia B. B. B.

Cheerful Looking Umbrellas. Why should we look dull on a rainy day? We can be cheerful-looking even to our umbrella now, for the colored silk umbrellas for rain or shine are so popular this summer. This combination umbrella and parasol offers protection from sun and shower alike. Some of these umbrellas have ivory tips and ferrules to match the handles.