Carolyn of the Corners

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CAROLYN AND PRINCE HAVE ANOTHER ADVENTURE WHICH BRINGS THEM NEW LAURELS.

Synopsis.—Her father and mother reported lost at sea when the Transylvania, on which they had sailed for Europe, was sunk, Carolyn May Cameron—Mamsey Carlyn—is sent from New York to her brother-in-law, Augustus Snaga, at the Corners. The reception given her by her uncle is not very enthusiastic. Carolyn is also chilled by the stern demeanor of Aunty Snaga. Uncle Jerry's housekeeper. Snaga is dismissed when he learns from a lawyer friend of his brother-in-law that Carolyn has been left penniless. Prince Farlow, engaged to his pal, Carolyn, learns of the entanglement between her uncle and his one-time friend, Amanda Farlow, and the cause of the bitterness between the two families. Prince, the manager dog that Carolyn brought with her, and the boon companion of the lonesome girl, is in disfavor with Uncle Jed, who threatens to dispose of him, but Prince becomes a hero and wins the approval of the Carsons by capturing a tramp in the act of robbing the schoolhouse. The following Sunday, while Carolyn and her uncle, accompanied by Prince, are taking a walk in the woods they encounter Amanda Farlow. Prince kills a snake about to strike Amanda, and Carolyn introduces the two women to each other for the first time in years. Carolyn is dismayed when she learns from Chet Gormley, her mother's uncle, that she was left practically penniless and is a "charity" orphan.

CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"So, you are," scolded the child. "I am charity. I'm not like other girls that's got papas and mammas. I'm glad you know'd that before, but it didn't sound—charity—so hard as it does when she confirmed with a nod.

"My mother was charity," cried Miss Amanda, dropping on her knees beside the little girl. "She's only a—a friend, your uncle must love you."

"No, Miss Mandy!" gasped Carolyn May, "don't you s'pose he loves other folks? He loves Prince and Aunty Snaga and he—he used to love you long ago."

The woman's smooth cheeks burned scarlet and she stood up.

"I'm most sure he'd never stop loving a person if he'd once come to love 'em," said Carolyn May, with a high opinion of the moral character of Uncle Jed's character.

"Did you want to know if your Uncle Jed loves you?" she asked Carolyn May at last. "Do you want to know?"

"Oh, I do!" cried the little girl.

"Then ask him," advised Miss Amanda. "That's the only way to do with Jed Snaga, if you want to get at the truth. Out with it, square, and ask him."

"I will do it," Carolyn May said solemnly.

After the child had gone the woman went back into her little cottage and with her countenance did not wear the forbidding look that Carolyn May had looked back to see.

Grizzled at her heart was the old pain she had suffered years before and the conflict that had moved her mind so long ago was roused again.

"Oh, girl! Oh, Jed! How could you?" she cooned, rocking herself to and fro. "How could you?"

That very night the first snow flurry of the season drove against the panes of the big kitchen at the Snaga homestead. It was a real storm.

"I declare for't," said Mr. Snaga, "I guess winter's onto us, Aunty Rose."

This snow did not melt. It was the first in a hard frost, as Mr. Snaga said. Then came the thaw, and the last chance for a Sunday walk in the woods for some time to come. Carolyn May did not propose to miss it.

On this day she was determined to get him off by himself, for her heart was filled with a great purpose. She felt that they must come to an understanding.

On this particular occasion Uncle Jed sat down upon the log by the brook where Miss Amanda had once sat. Carolyn May stood before him.

"Am I just a charity orphan? Didn't my papa leave any money for me to live on? Did you take me just out of charity?"

"Hmm no!" gasped the barbware dealer.

"I—I wish you'd answer me, Uncle Jed," said the Carolyn May, with a brave effort to keep from crying.

Joseph Snaga was too honest a pal to see his way to dodging the question.

"Hmm! Well, I'll tell you, Carlyn May," he said at last. "I'll tell you a fact. It isn't your father's fault. He thought there was enough money for me to go on because it got into bad hands and the rest of the egg he'd laid up for his family was lost."

The startled child was just clearly. And you're—you're—whispered Carolyn May. "I—I guess we must have a—a—a charity."

"Hmm! Well, I'll tell you, Carlyn May. Shame hasn't got