

The Circle

By

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Gift
Mrs. H. H. Higley
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**Dedicated to
My Darling Mother
Elizabeth De Ville Cordesman.**

PREFACE

My second book, and I am so happy to have it published. This story was given to me by a well-known screen star, who is now in Spirit.

I was inspired to write *The Circle* April 9th, 1926. I wrote three chapters, then lost connection somehow. I again was inspired November 3rd, 1926, and promptings came to me rapidly and I soon finished my story.

I lost one poem and one sonnet; I tried very hard to get them but could not. I hope they are not lost forever, and perchance this same kind spirit may guide and inspire some other girl, in another clime, to write to his dictation the poems that are lost to me.

I want you to like Donald, Dorothy and Sylvia, my characters in *The Circle*.

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PROLOGUE

Rarely do we meet upon the Earth Plane, the mate, so intended by the Higher Power. So be it that each and every one is always looking for a thrill or sensation that would make them complete.

The feeling that someone is missing, makes them desirous to have someone, sometimes a person not even interested. For that one, too, is after a mate, and is wildly chasing another, and when they catch up to them, after a hard run, they find all their castles and desires in ashes.

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But to each and everyone, is a mate
—the forming of a perfect pair. This
mating is acknowledged as soon as
one sheds their earthly body. They
see a circle, and in it their beloved,
bright, lovely and happy.

To complete this current, many
wait years and years. Some are
thrown together in a short season
upon the earth plane, as with Donald
and Sylvia, our pair of the Circle.

Chapter I

BUDDING

To the little boy of yesterday
God bless this little man.
He knew each stick and stone and tree—
His mind was clean and his heart was
 free
And before him laid the earth to span.

Let us turn back to yesterday,
when Donald was a boy of eleven,
serious, bright-eyed little fellow, who
sometimes wanted to be alone. His
dear little golden-haired sister, Dru-
cil, seemed a bore and a pest to him,
but he loved her.

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Adoration for his mother and father, but, after obeying and loving them as parents, he had no further interest. Donald though, had a pal in his grandfather. This great man meant something in his small life. Grandpa Clermont loved the out of doors, and he lived a life such as we seldom hear about. He hailed from old England, was truthful, kind and patient.

In his younger days, he was a great Archer—proud of all this sport had given him. He brought his beloved bows to America. The cousins and nephews that he left in England, learned to shoot the bow and loved their instructor. But his only son

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held no interest in this sport, so he was much alone.

Then came the happy day, when Donald asked his grandfather to make him a bow and some arrows. Then through the glasses of time, he saw his own image in his grandchild and was happy.

It was so promised that this gift should be completed, on and for Donald's twelfth birthday. The days became very long ones to Donald, seemed as though the joyous day would never come. To Duke the days were too short, he worked hard and long and late into the night. Time will pass, and Donald thanked his father, mother and sister for

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their gifts to him, put them all carefully away. Then with his bow and arrow, he wandered into the garden.

Let us tell about Clemont's garden, for we may spend happy minutes therein. It was spacious, with sloping ground covered with a velvet green carpet. Here many of their friends met and put up their ten pins. They would bowl for hours out there on the green, you could hear the balls as they broke into the pins and scattered them, then hear the peals of laughter from the Scotch players. Most of the neighbors were Scotch and so was their game. It was called "Bowling on the Green."

It was over this ground that Don-

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ald wandered with his new toy. He was too happy to want even Duke, a name given his grandfather. A wonderfully large tree stood at the end of the garden, with spreading branches and nice soft grass beneath. Here, Donald comfortably settled himself. He placed the bow and arrow beside him so that he could admire and pet them to his heart's desire.

Chapter II

SWEET WILLIAM

A Spiritual pal of deep devotion—
Of a force so strongly given
That the very stars above them,
Smile as angels do in heaven.

While staring at his new possession a queer thrill passed over him, and there, right at his feet, was the nicest little boy he had ever seen, a boy just like himself. The queer part to Donald was, he too, had a bow and some arrows. Then sister came running to him, to tell him they had company, and his boy disappeared.

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Drucil had caused this, had taken something from him, he knew. "Shucks" was all he could say but it meant a lot. And would this nice boy come back, and just who would he tell—anyway he would wait until tomorrow then go back and sit beneath the same tree.

We will not dwell upon the time spent with his little friends and sister. Late that night Donald felt a little pressure on his arm, rubbing his eyes, he awoke and looked into the face of his new friend. Donald smiled a welcome, stretched out a hand, then the boy disappeared. Donald lay awake for a while to won-

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der just why this boy left him so quickly.

To the tree he trudged next morning, and to his surprise, found the boy waiting. He arose as Donald approached and strolled by his side, they were soon engulfed in the woods. Donald turned to the boy and said, "My name is Donald—mother calls me Don—" The boy answered, "My name is Billy but mother calls me Sweet William." "I shall call you Billy," said Donald, and so another bond twined around them.

Then Duke was taken into their confidence, and although he could not see the little fellow, he felt the thrill and knew he was there.

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The three spent years of happy times together, shooting the bow and taking long jaunts in the woods. But now they were growing into precious manhood and Duke was growing old. Wonderful youths, these two, the pride of Heaven and Earth; and sister was sweet and pretty to look upon. Still, to Donald, a pest who could and would not be serious, not even for a day.

Chapter III

THE PARTING

It's lost, this day is done
But may it come again for me
And give me happiness,
Because I'll spend it, dear, with thee.

The splendor of it all—Donald was to be twenty-one, and guests were invited from far and near. The old house was gone over with paint, soap and water. Empty spots were filled with new furniture, and flowers were everywhere. Donald was happy for this was his companion's birthday, also, and it brought great joy to

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his heart. Well he knew that upon this day something of importance was to take place. He thought of everything he wanted and knew most of his wishes would be granted. Donald just beamed on each and everyone and smiled a great smile into the eyes of each little girl, and every heart beat fast, for they all thought Donald a wondrous lad.

Donald slipped away and threw himself beneath the same tree to welcome Billy. Soon he was at his feet, with a sweet smile, half sad. "Our birthday," he was saying, "a great day has passed Donald, a happy day—but nothing lasts upon the earth plane, and this grand compan-

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ionship, love and understanding is your foundation for a wonderful future. Today I leave you, my pal—for my mother tells me, that upon the earth plane is my perfect love, my vibration, my complete circle—I must go to her, watch and wait, for soon she will be with me. I shall come to you again, years may pass, but I promise to come and when you shall need me most.”

Donald's heart seemed to stand still, never to see Billy again—could he bear up under such a strain, this world would be cold and empty without Billy. But he knew he could not wish or persuade when his dear Billy

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had a great work to do, and Billy would be happy in his new love.

Then he said, "Sweet William, I shall miss you. I shall count the days until your return, and though my heart is sinking within me, I shall think of you, dream of you, love you always. I owe my perfect being, my God-like thoughts, to your dear spirit, to be guided by you through these years. This guidance has given to me a true understanding of all things, after you leave me may I be a brave, true and capable being. Let us pull our bows, dear pal—and send an arrow into the heart of that great oak—there to remain until we meet again."

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After they shot—then turned to one another for a long last look, and with the sad smile on his face Sweet William disappeared.

Chapter IV

ALONE

Life would be a lonesome one
Through many, many years
Without his dear Sweet William
To share his sunshine and his tears.

For a long time Donald waited, he knew not why, then strains of music reached him, they seemed to call to him, so he walked slowly to the house. He just can't remember how his tortured heart bore up under the strain, the chattering, dancing, laughing youths made his sorrow harder to bear. Next morning Don-

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ald confided in his grandfather, and the dear soul was sorry and tried to comfort his darling— to him, Donald was still a boy.

Together, Donald and Duke, went for long walks, hesitating on familiar spots, but Sweet William did not appear. One day Duke said to Donald, "Suppose we change our scenery, let us move westward for a year. Uncle Robert would be very pleased to have us with him and Aunt Barbara would love it. I feel strong and would like to see the other side of this country."

They laid their plans before his mother and father, quite reluctantly they gave their consent. So after a

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month of entertaining, packing and saying "Good Byes," Duke and Donald left New York for the sunny west.

Chapter V

ONWARD

An exciting trip to Donald, for this was his first long trip. He made a memorandum of every interesting town, of the mountains, the valleys, the rivers; he wrote how he enjoyed his meals on the train and the berth pleased him too—this he put in letter form and mailed home. He bought some little Indian dolls for Drucil, a shawl for his mother and a pair of moccasins for his father, and Duke enjoyed the paying for them. Four days and four nights and then they

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arrived at a little station in Southern California called Vermont.

With bag and baggage they waited on the platform in a heavy rain-storm, it poured and the lightning was piercing, it thundered, and Donald thought this an omen—for it seldom rained in California, that is, in the southern part. This rain came straight down with no wind to drive it. He made his fears known to his grandfather.

They waited but a few minutes, when a man called their names. It was the house butler, driver, protector and chief counsellor to his uncle, Robert Sawyer. Donald made his Duke comfortable in the back seat

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with some of the grips, suit-cases, bows and what not, then he climbed in with the driver. By this time it not only rained, but a mist came up, and between the two, the driver had all he could do to see the way—however he told them the roads were not dangerous.

Donald peered ahead, and in front of him stood a figure signalling for him to go back—he asked the driver to stop—the kind man obeyed and Donald explained. “I have no belief in such things but I will take another road, for there is a small bridge ahead and I will follow your hunch.” It so happened that the bridge was no more. And so the wet drive ended

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and Donald found himself in a warm, lighted room, and aunt Barbara kissing his cold cheek and welcoming him in a loving manner. She was almost draped in a big, soft, wool shawl which clung to his buttons when she walked away.

“A good sign, Donald, it means a strong tie of affection and I have always wanted a big boy to love, cherish and deal out advice to.”

She was sitting now in an old chintz covered chair — Donald thought her a picture, for she was quite old and dainty and her hair was the whitest ever. Duke was busy talking and together they enjoyed living in the long ago.

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An old darky drawled out from the kitchen, that she had made ready the lunch—though almost midnight, these good souls knew their guests would be hungry. They had a bowl of milk and some crackers, while Duke and Donald ate quite a hearty meal. Then goodnight and to bed—the pair were so tired they were soon fast asleep.

Chapter VI

PANSLET

Next morning Donald pushed aside the heavy net curtains. The sky was strewn with little fleeting clouds, through which an orange sun shone brightly and encouragingly, then he lowered his eyes to the garden, there was a feast to behold. Flowers of all colors, a little fountain in the center of blooming shrubs, and sweet magnolia trees. He called to Duke and together they looked long upon this garden and knew they were going to love it.

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Donald then took stock of his room, it all carried comfort. It was large, with a wall-tinting of gray, a pink ceiling and a mixed carpet, the furniture was oak and strongly built, but the thing that pleased Donald most, was the nice roomy closet and desk, for his use. Let us look into the adjoining room, the one for Duke's comfort. A bed of walnut, with coverings, pillows and quilts soft as down, all made in the long ago. Hand made rugs upon the floor and two great chairs to read and rest in. A large bay-window where Duke could sit and view a tennis court, garden path, artistic benches and a summer house, all belonging to a neighbor.

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Duke chuckled to himself at the idea of having the company of Robert. Pleasant morning greetings, a tasty breakfast, and Donald felt at home and acquainted. Ben Lloyd, the chauffeur, butler and advisor, sat at the same table, in fact he was part of the family. The old darkey's name was Hannah, and her hot biscuits and fried chicken held the world's record, at least in this little world called "Panslet"—the name given to the estate of Sawyer.

Donald strolled about the grounds and found, to his delight, a place to plant his target. This bit of delight he immediately carried to Duke, and these two started to work and in a

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short time were ready to try their bows. Uncle Bob was an interested spectator and wanted to learn to shoot the bow. Here was a new joy for Duke. Donald was fast losing his Duke to his uncle Bob, so he was left much alone.

Chapter VII

SYLVIA

My dearest phantom of delight,
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely vibration sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
Like twilight, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From moonbeams to the cheerful dawn;
A dreamy shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle and waylay.

And so he became moody, sitting
thus one night, he heard his name
spoken, and at his feet upon a tuffet
sat Sweet William. This recalled the
first time, when as a boy, he saw

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Billy at his feet. "I have some news for you, Donald—your dear mate is over here—and I am going to bring her to you—have you see her, know her and love her." Donald said it was time he was having a mate of some kind, and for the first time he became homesick.

"Then, Dear Donald," said Billy, "let me bring to you, Sylvia—the life and joy of the spirit world." Then, before him, stood a living spirit, as clear and bright as an earth being—with dark hair all waved in ringlets, dark eyes that were brown and velvety, and an artistic nose, mouth and chin. Donald, being an artist, saw

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the beauty and picture of it all—for love had not entered his heart.

She beamed upon him, this Sylvia, she came close and touched his hair, his eyes and his hands. Thrilled from his head to his feet, Donald dropped upon his knees—he wanted to kiss her gown, but it was so spiritual, he could not feel it.

Sweet William stood by, with the air of a man that has just accomplished a great deed. Sylvia disappeared and Donald relaxed and smiled, and was again alone. He was made happy, for had not he seen Billy again, and seen Sylvia; but, mused Donald, it would be far nicer to have a mate upon the earth than

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one that one cannot touch, but he wished her to come again. He intended to watch for her, as he had for Billy beneath the tree. And she did come again and again, their meetings became part of the routine of the day, and Donald looked forward to them with a great joy.

Chapter VIII

THE ARTISTS' CLUB

This little town of Vermont boasted of an exclusive Artists' Club, so with the help of Uncle Bob and his friends, Donald became a member—all men of high standing and acknowledged artists were members of this club. With his easel and paints, Donald went on locations and loved the work, and so was inspired by a Spirit Artist named Jerome Nowattny, who had been a professor of art for years upon the earth plane. With his coaching, Donald's work was un-

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dergoing a change—life grew into the things he painted, birds seemed to fly—flowers to bloom, and brooks to ripple. All this, with his beloved bow, and the visits of Sylvia, made Donald's life a living joy.

Invitations were extended to the members of the Artists' Club to spend a few days on the outskirts of San Francisco. A wealthy member had a large estate there, he was a Jap artist—the estate covered acres. All the architecture was Japanese—summer houses, benches, bridges and gardens—all food for the brush.

Donald painted so fast his wrist ached, his eyes took in more than he could accomplish. At night they

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were entertained in the heart of San Francisco. Donald was as though in a dream, for this Japanese element pleased his artistic soul and for so short a time allotted—Donald saw and tasted his way into another world.

Leaving the night's entertainment, Donald spied a little Jap boy standing on the curb, crying as though his heart would break. He went over to the boy and to his surprise found he could speak English, that his parents were dead and he, poor chap, belonged to nobody. Donald liked the boy, and encouraged by his friends, took him along. When Donald arrived home he was greeted with looks of sur-

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prise, for all eyes were riveted upon his little ragged Jap.

Within a week Donald changed the ragamuffin into a little prince; he got him a dark red uniform and in this outfit he looked quite wise and pert. Donald was pleased with this unique little heathen and he took him entirely into his service. He carried the easel and oil box when Donald painted, and occupied the back seat of the car.

During his day-time walks, the boy was ever at his heels, and would bring the arrows from the target. This strong, subtle little creature would play upon a funny little instrument given to him by the Jap artist—this wierd music fascinated Donald at

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times, but when he played too often or too long Donald would ask him to stop—then he would look hurt and slyly sneak away and hide.

Chapter IX

THE SURPRISE

Donald returned one evening from a hike in the woods, whistled a tune to Hannah a warning of hunger. He could see the wavering glare of the log fire in the drawing-room. With his hand on the drawing-room door, he paused, it seemed as if some actual force was urging him not to enter.

As if by impulse he thrust the door wide open and went rushing into the room, there, before the fire, stood what he thought was Sylvia. The figure came toward him with out-

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stretched hand and a sweet voice said, "So you are Donald—I am Dorothy Lane—I live next door." Donald took the hand, a material hand full of earthly vibration.

He shut his eyes, fearing absolutely to look at her. "Is the fire too bright for your eyes, Donald?" "I heard so much about you and you so resemble a loved one that you startled me as I have never been startled before." Donald excused himself and left her to dress for dinner—seemed but a few moments when he re-entered the room.

He is handsome, thought Dorothy, but not broad enough shouldered, and he is too tall—fine nose and loving

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mouth—lots of will-power. Donald seemed ill at ease, a little sullen—and his answers to her questions were short. Poor Donald, 'twas the likeness between this Dorothy Lane and his Sylva that hurt him. Each gesture, figure and face were all identical, the high, modelled forehead—eyes of darkest pools—what trick was nature playing upon him.

Dorothy was delightful, frank and original, in a word—but Donald was overcome by the great likeness. When Dorothy took leave, he walked with her to her home, she invited him to visit her next day.

He kept his tryst with Sylvia—his soul-mate. This night she seemed

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more beautiful than ever before. He feasted his eyes upon her, she looked grieved and Donald inquired, "What is it Sylvia? Is it because of Dorothy?" She nodded her head and left him.

Next day Donald did not go to visit Dorothy—for the sad look upon the face of Sylvia remained with him all day.

And so a week had passed and Donald worked very hard, for he was sending some of his pictures to an art exhibit. His uncle Bob was learning to pull the bow, although it had taken him a long time, he never grew tired, and in this he was re-

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warded with a love from both Duke and Donald.

One day Donald decided he wanted to fish, and equipped with his fishing tackle, he tramped through the woods to a small brook, with Sam, the Jap boy, right at his heels. He tried to find a comfortable way to sit, when he heard a gurgling laugh, and there, perched upon some rocks, sat Dorothy. "You remind me of a cat, Donald, trying to find a softer place on the pillow; help me down, you great big man." Donald scampered to her rescue, and when her hand touched his, he felt a thrill, the blood mounted to his face, he grew sullen, afraid he had betrayed his

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adorable Sylvia. Then he changed his mood and acted much like an interested admirer. Dorothy seemed to understand—for she asked him to tell her of her double. Donald frowned again, "Never mention her to me," he said. "But," said Dorothy, "I should so much like to know of her, please tell me, is she someone you left in the east, have you quarrelled?" "She has passed on, is in Spirit World," said Donald.

The statement made Dorothy very happy, for she liked Donald and did not want him to be longing for a living love, she thought to try and have him forget, have him interested in herself. Had Donald taken her into

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his entire confidence, this thought would never have transpired.

Donald just hated his being when he caught himself taking side glances at Dorothy—he did not want to know how her hair curled around her face—or to notice her classic profile, or to see her trim little ankle. He had to upbraid himself for he was enjoying all these things, he was sure—and was Sylvia looking down from above with that sad sweet smile still on her face? He hoped she could not see or know he was walking by Dorothy's side. Dorothy gave Donald her hand and looked wistfully up at him, he looked past her dear head as if in a dream.

Chapter X

THE AWAKENING

Do not grieve Dorothy, your
 eyes are wet,
Let laughter come,
 and tears forget—
Though heartaches now bring
 you sorrow's tears
Smiles shall be yours
 in future years;
To cry, my dear, is
 Nature's own way,
Your time will come and
 you will stay.

Dorothy walked slowly into the house, she was in a love dream. She went to her room—admired herself—

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pressed her face close to the mirror so that her full warm lips pressed the cold glass. "Foolish girl, Dorothy, he doesn't love you." Then she fell upon her knees and sobbed, "Love me—me—love me—oh! God, make him love me—she has gone—is dead, I tell you, dead." She fell upon the floor and writhed and sobbed until the very walls vibrated with her agonized sobs. Tears fell thick and fast, heated and smarted her face. "Poor Dorothy," she cried, "poor Dorothy." Then she stood upon her feet, and reaching for her perfume, she patted her hair, her shoulders, and her bare arms with the soothing, cooling odor, then she sank into a

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chair and tried to reason out this new feeling that was upon her—her first love, she wondered—did it come to each and every one in this manner?—finally darkness crept in upon her.

Next day Donald called at the Lane home, he had tea with Dorothy and her aunt. They put forth the best china and the daintiest cakes, with crystallized jam. He liked Dorothy's aunt and liked being in Dorothy's home. In fact he felt so jovial that, for the first time he invited Dorothy to try her hand at his beloved sport. Dorothy's eyes just danced, she hugged and kissed her aunt to show how the invitation had pleased her. They were to meet next day at one o'clock.

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Donald made it known at home that night, that Dorothy was to learn to shoot the bow, he also mentioned the time, and he would like also to borrow uncle Bob's bow, for he probably would not be playing at this time. Duke and Uncle stole glances at one another, adding a knowing wink or two.

One o'clock and Dorothy was skipping across the green to Panslet. Donald was waiting, he saw her coming, and when she drew near, he blushed like a school boy. Hours flew by, Dorothy was an apt pupil and Donald a good teacher, so both got along well together. They grew warm and tired, and quit in time to

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dress for dinner. When they parted, it was to be but a few hours, for they were to meet again at twilight.

Happy day for Dorothy, she lived every moment of it to the fullest. Donald too, was glad, and as the sun cast her golden rays on Dorothy, Donald found a subject for his next painting, he saw the clear cut features of the Madonna and now, in the twilight, he told her of his desire and begged her to model for him. Dorothy was only too willing and wanted to pinch herself to see if she were dreaming.

So, thereafter, each day Dorothy visited Panslet and posed for two hours for the portrait, and each day

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she would bring a box of lunch for two; in this way enchanting hours were spent and a glorious being was transferred to the canvas. Dorothy wore a pale lavender frock with the daintiest of lace, and little bows of ribbons were its trimming, she reminded Donald of a violet, and angel, or sea shell—each day he had a new fancy.

After the two hours were spent on the painting, they would go for a stroll or shoot the bow, then a parting to meet at twilight, and into each hour was woven the song of love.

One night Donald returned home, after swinging on Dorothy's gate for over an hour. Right in the doorway

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stood Sweet William, this was indeed a joy for Donald. They walked in the garden while Billy told of his love and his happiness, and when he was ready to leave his last words were, "Donald, what of Sylvia?" That night his happy heart turned as to stone and he cried with pain, he called Sylvia and begged her to come to him, nothing but his own voice echoed in his ears.

Dorothy was thrilled and her heart was filled with ecstasy, she was glad, then fell into the calm, peaceful sleep of a tired child. Donald slept not, he worried and fretted the entire night. Finally he thought of going to Duke, for he could bear his burden

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no longer—his dear grandfather, half asleep, listened to the sad tale between the living and the dead, his heart went out to his boy—and he would try to help him.

“Donald,” he said, “we cannot live with the dead, it was wonderful to have Billy for a pal—but now that you have grown into manhood, you will want a wife, a home and children to gladden your heart when you grow old. Donald, suppose your father had not married, what would my life have been like, I lived again in you, my dear. And Donald, Dorothy is everything that is lovely and good, and I know both your father and mother would approve such a union

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and welcome Dorothy with parental love. Be happy, dear child, upon the earth plane, be brave, true to yourself and true to others, and you will be happy in this world and in the next." He patted Donald's hand, assuring him that he was doing that which was noble and good. In an easier state of mind, Donald went back to bed and the few hours that were left, were filled with dreams of Dorothy's portrait and orange blossoms.

While painting Dorothy's portrait, a few days later, he tilted her chin, and in so doing, came in close contact, he put both arms about her and kissed her many, many times as

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though he were starved and could not release her. Dorothy just went limp with joy, she freed herself from his arms and flew homeward as fast as she could, then to her room—there, upon her knees, she thanked God for the fulfillment of her great desire.

Donald stood rooted to the spot for a long time, he still could feel her in his arms and he did not want to move, just live those precious minutes over and over again. He knew Dorothy loved him and right here he promised his gods to love, honor and protect her, he would tell her so that very night.

Chapter XI

TWILIGHT

Twilight, as love, may come and go,
Between the light and dark, 'twas
 ever so,
In other years to those that pray
The wish to leave this earth, not stay
 At Twilight.

Living, eating, drinking, then pay
At Twilight, the passing of the day,
Days come running their allotted span
That the Earth has made possible for
 man
 At Twilight.

And so we all shall have a way
When we will not tarry ev'n for a day,
With our life completed and soul-mate
 found
Who shall say, we are earth bound
 At Twilight.

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Twilight, their trysting time, but this twilight was the best of all—for Donald forgot there were two worlds, he just lived in one, Dorothy's world. He told his love story over and over, and they sat for hours, either holding hands or their arms around each other, and the great moon looked on and smiled. They were in their own land of dreams.

In their land of dreams,
Happy land of dreams,
As they sit hand in hand
And they both understand
How true it all seems;
Now the twilight is low,
Shadows come and go

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But the whole world is bright
For they are happy tonight
In the land of dreams.

Donald's brain was in a whirl—he wanted to be married right now. It was so hard to part.

When Donald woke upon the morrow, he sought for Duke. He found both Duke and Uncle Bob on the range. Since Dorothy learned to shoot the bow, Uncle Bob and Duke gave up to the children, as they called them, and found the early morning hours the best for their sport. Donald eagerly told them of his engagement to Dorothy—this broke up the game and all walked back to the house as happy as bluebirds.

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Duke promised Donald to build a love nest for them and Uncle Bob, not to be outdone—gave him the land to build it on. “Ah!” said Duke, “his parents shall furnish the house.” In this way the morning passed too quickly, spent in eager speculation on the coming nuptial. At midday, Aunt Barbara called them to lunch—she was so happy, she beamed upon Donald with mother love. Donald then hastened to get busy on the portrait of Dorothy—there was the exhibit at Chicago to again think about, dream of, and talk to Dorothy about. So each touch of the brush was a touch of loving care, a stroke of beauty and of joy.

Chapter XII

PLANNING

"THE GARDEN"

Let us grow a garden like of old,
There is so many things to do
To place a fountain in its center
With shells, bird baths and songs for
you.

There will be blossoms on the trees,
Their perfume, to waft, and to hold
And many lovely things like these
With flowers gay, a picture to behold.

Donald intended drawing the plans
for his own home, this pleased
Dorothy, so instead of sitting in the
moonlight, one could look in the

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drawing room and see two eager heads bending over great sheets of paper, and soon upon it will grow a house, a garden with flower beds and a fountain. Lovely trees and benches for lovers to sit upon, a bird bath for little birds to drink at, bathe and arrange their feathery clothes. Then they sigh happy sighs of love and contentment. It was on such a night as this that Donald left Dorothy at her gate—wandered home, and with love's abandon, threw himself within an easy chair to ponder over his new found happiness.

Suddenly he felt cold, then warm, then a sad fear gripped his heart, for gliding into the room, came the

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glorious form of Sylvia. And standing before Donald in all her radiance, she looked at him sadly and yearningly—"This cannot be, Donald." She drew nearer and nearer, then bending her graceful form over him, she touched his brow, she kissed his mouth and was gone.

Poor Donald, how hard was the life of a seer, not to be able to choose your bride—from the living or the dead. In the days gone by, Donald could carry burdens such as this to Duke. But now that Duke was so happy over his engagement to Dorothy, he did not want to change this condition, so Duke was permitted to sleep in blissful ignorance. Donald

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had pledged his love to Dorothy and he swore he would never cause her one moment of regret.

Next day Donald decided to take Dorothy into his confidence, tell her of Sweet William and Sylvia. He would relate each visit, he then went over and lived through the past, of the pleasure and the wonder of it all. But when he saw Dorothy next day, he could not tell her. Sylvia came to Donald for three nights and stood radiantly in the moonlight, an angel, a lovely lady to behold. Donald thought her more beautiful than ever before, knew that he loved her and was sorry and ashamed of his earthly love. He knelt before her, begging

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for forgiveness, his heart torn cruelly for love—the living power that should make us more happy. Once again she left a dewy kiss upon his mouth and disappeared.

Chapter XIII

A TRIP IN THE NIGHT

'Tis love's sunshine sets the rivers free,
Rushing in torrents to the sea,
And in each morning's sunlight beam
'Tis love unlocks each frozen stream.
If warm or cold neglect be thine,
Fond love thaws out the wintry wind,
And o'er the hills and valleys fair
The sun warms out the winter's air.
Coldness in your heart cannot be long
When nature charms with love and song.
Love's sway alone may the heart uncloset
Fragrant as the budding rose,
Within its heart the diamond dew
Refreshes its soul with life anew.

Donald could stand this strain no longer, so he packed his grip and went out into the night, he drove

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like mad. Early dawn found him once more in San Francisco. He drove to the Art Club, had breakfast, put up his grips, then went out for a walk. He walked for an hour or more, he thought how unreasonable this trip had been, he knew he was sorrowful, he tried so hard to reason why the lovely Dorothy should not be his without hurting Sylvia so.

He called upon a few friends in their studios, told in glowing words of the portrait of Dorothy and that he had a permit for the exhibition at Chicago, and that it would be finished soon. He told them of his engagement and love for Dorothy, of the plans of his home and of the

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gifts bestowed upon him by his grandfather and Uncle Bob. He promised to have dinner at the club and attend a party at night, a hasty affair to be given in his honor. For he also told them he would leave next day for Panslet.

Donald took a room at the club, threw himself on the bed, his thoughts flew homeward and he wondered just how much anxiety he was causing his Aunt, Uncle and Duke, and also his beloved Dorothy. He arose immediately and sent a wire to Dorothy and explained he would be home next night. Now that this was attended to, Donald

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took forty winks, and awoke just in time to dress for dinner.

Sorrow seemed to leave him and once again he knew that Dorothy was all that mattered, for was she not a soul in the flesh, and he could feel her very heart beats, and her warm lips upon his mouth. He could hold her fast in his arms and she loved him, 'twas true, and beautiful to look upon—he decided he was indeed blest, and would not worry again.

Donald made the best of his visit, just as though it were all planned, he was jovial, almost happy. Their pleasure lasted until midnight and it was a very tired Donald that climbed

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into bed. He fully intended to get an early start next morning, but the sun was streaming into his room at an angle that told Donald it was past nine o'clock.

He dressed hurriedly, breakfasted, and started homeward. He arrived at night. All were gathered in the dining-room waiting his return— anxious to know what took him away from home in such a secretive manner. Donald would relate all to Duke—but just now he could not explain—he did say he went for a long walk and bought this—and from a velvet case, glistened the ring that was to be placed on a third finger of the shapely hand of Doro-

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thy. All further inquiries were forgotten. After Donald had dined, they gathered about to chat. Donald took Dorothy in his arms, kissed her and placed the ring upon her finger.

The days following were devoted to the portrait. Dorothy posed until she was so exhausted she almost went into a sleep during the sittings. One day Dorothy stepped back a few paces to better admire the painting, she looked long and hard at it, a queer feeling passing through her body, "Donald," she said, "those eyes in the portrait seem different from mine—I find a look of sadness that I did not see before." Donald noticed it too, it did seem different, "perhaps

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we are both tired and have become blind to the painting; let us rest to-morrow, dear one, or have a picnic in the woods." The next day was a day of love's abandon, idleness and pleasure. Dorothy danced, ran, and loved to her heart's content; never, never would she forget this day—and she must have something for her treasure box. "Donald dear, let me have a curl from your head—I want it to place with a sprig of Rosemary—for sweet remembrance."

The curl still remained upon Donald's head until they sat side by side in the living room of the Lanes'. Dorothy opened her sewing basket, took from it a tiny pair of scissors,

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then gathering a curl between her fingers, she deftly cut it off. She pressed it to her lips, she could not tell why, but tears fell softly upon the head of Donald. And when he discovered more in her eyes, he kissed them all away. Dorothy thought they were tears of happiness. So they petted and cooed as all lovers do, until they had to part, until the morrow.

Chapter XIV

A TEAR

Donald was tired and fell into a deep slumber in which he had a dream, he saw Dorothy running towards him, he gathered her in his arms and when he wanted to kiss her lips, he found them to be Sylvia's. When he awoke in the morning, he remembered this dream clearly.

Aunt Barbara beamed on him with a motherly love, had a breakfast for him fit for a king. She was happy to have this nice boy with her and on this day wished to tell him so. "What

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is it, Aunt Barbara," asked Donald, "have you good news for me?" "Yes, Donald, I have a letter from your mother, they are all coming out here to live and they will be here for the wedding. They wanted so to surprise you, but I am too happy to keep their secret, for, Donald dear, I was so afraid that they would grow lonesome and wish their son to return to them—that would leave me lonely, for I have learned to love you." Donald kissed his aunt and thanked her for this great love, the happiness she had given him, the comfort and the cheer.

Donald hurried to his studio, undraped his painting, wiped his brush-

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es, and while slipping into his smock, glanced at the painting; truly he was not blind to his work this morning—but as he looked, he saw a tear fall from the eye of the portrait. He walked over to better examine it, it was now part of the portrait, for it was painted on so naturally that it seemed as though it could be brushed off. He wiped it out before Dorothy could discover it. So tediously he worked, until it was as before—a portrait of a lovely lady.

Dorothy came in with a smile on her lips and a song in her heart, she made many little exclamatory “Oh! Oh’s!” She loved this masterpiece of Donald’s and she told him so over and

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over. Then she posed and Donald painted and the morning passed quickly—they went over to Dorothy's home for lunch then back to work again—giving every minute in the name of art. Donald wanted to win a prize, he was eager and expectant, both Dorothy and Donald could talk of nothing else.

But sad foreboding thoughts crept over Donald when he would think of the dream and the tear on the canvas, so real that no earthly artist could have painted it. But youth and love soon forget sorrow and Donald was happy once again.

Next day Donald told Dorothy she might rest. So, to make others

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happy, Dorothy joined Duke and Uncle Bob at their sport, while Donald remained at the studio to paint the lovely lace upon the dress. He laid the dress upon a chair and when he would arrange it, he would caress the folds and often touch his lips to its softness. While working thus—he felt a presence and Sylvia stood near, the first time she had visited him in the studio.

Donald greeted her, and in this nervous state painted the portrait, she looked long and piercingly, and Donald was sure he heard a little sigh, as she vanished from his sight. He tried to be calm and work, but not accomplishing anything, he thought it best to leave and in a short

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time stood beside Dorothy, ready to aim at his beloved target.

Donald had much to do upon the dress, so he again offered Dorothy a day of rest. He arranged the garment as before and went eagerly about his work, but in his mind this arrangement did not please him, for the folds of lace would not behave. He plodded on, raised his head and behold! there sat Sylvia in the dress, she nodded to him to continue his work, and he did. He painted like a mad man, and it grew, this lace under his brush—such lace, such folds, was ever an artist so inspired and blessed before. And she, dear Spirit, sat until it was finished—

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Donald walked forward to thank her, but as he drew near, she left, leaving the dress in a little heap upon the throne.

Donald wanted so to confide in someone, but he had lost Duke as his right bower. He left the studio very tired in mind and body and walked slowly to the house. He went early to bed that night, for on the morrow he would finish the portrait.

Chapter XV

THE PORTRAIT

Dorothy was the first to enter the studio on the morrow, she stood spell-bound, had ever a girl looked upon a portrait of herself and found it so wonderful—the dress was a surprise to her, she could not admire it enough—the meshes of lace looked as though you could feel their fineness. Donald truly was a remarkable artist and lover too—thought Dorothy. She was quite sure there was no other like him. She grew restless alone and finally wandered

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out to meet him—in her stroll she soon reached the house, she called in at the open door and Donald spied her, drank in the love from her laughing eyes. Dorothy told him of her early hour at the studio and how she praised the work on the dress, how she adored her portrait, and she just knew she could not be anything but vain after looking at such a canvas in all its splendor.

Arm in arm they returned to work and within a few hours the portrait was finished. The lovers stood gazing, commenting, praising and worshipping the work before them. That night they had a plan—to invite all the friends and neighbors that

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were near to visit next day, at tea, to see Donald's masterpiece. They kept the phone busy for hours and two very tired young people went to bed and to peaceful slumbers.

Next morning everybody was busy. The studio was made clean and neat, chairs were brought in from the Sawyers and the Lanes, and the great tea urn was filled with tea, cookies were baked—hearts were made light with love and laughter. Donald curtained his portrait with great care, as he did this, he felt a light touch on his arm—and to his satisfied surprise—there stood Sweet William. “Let us walk, dear Donald,”—so out into the open they

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strolled, these two boys, one in the spirit, the other a proud specimen of early manhood. "So glad for your return, Billy, I have no one to talk to or confide in since you ceased to be ever at my side, and you are happy Billy dear, and you do like the portrait of Dorothy?" He did not give Sweet William a chance to answer. But Sweet William was happy, he also thought Dorothy lovely and beautiful but could not understand how Donald could prefer her to the radiant Sylvia, knowing Sylvia was his true soul-mate. Donald read Billy's thoughts, then tried to explain that he was an earth being, full of youth and love. "But, dear Donald,

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I have a happy little surprise for you, you shall be happy on earth and also in Spirit World, this shall be the fruit of my toil for my pal—it shall be my gift to you—dearest Donald,” and with this lovely message—Sweet William left him.

That afternoon Dorothy came over, all dressed in white, it startled Donald for she looked so spiritually pure and exactly like Sylvia. The lawn was soon dotted with pretty dresses of all hues and designs. Donald was kept busy showing his beloved portrait and hearing honest, friendly praise. Aunt Barbara too, was busy, she poured the tea and chatted like a magpie, for she was

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proud and filled with mother love. This day ended all too soon for just everyone.

Next day the house echoed with happy voices for Donald's loved ones had arrived. Donald showed them the portrait and eagerly watched their faces for approval and parental pride, he saw love light shining in their eyes and knew that they loved their son. They praised the beauty of the girl model, his Dorothy. And when they did meet Dorothy, their hearts went out to her with a great love.

The portrait was crated and soon on its way to the exhibit in the Chicago Institute. Many will be the

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guides that will help Donald win recognition and become a great artist of fame and fortune.

Chapter XVI

UNITED SPIRITUAL FORCES

A month has passed, Dorothy and Drucil had become fast friends, and Donald's parents became her parents, she won their love and was glad. It was again the time when the full moon shone from above. Donald and Dorothy wended their way through the garden and stopped beside the fountain. Dorothy looked unusually beautiful this night, her eyes were star lit, her mouth seemed redder than ever before. He was about to take her in his arms, when, gliding toward him, came Sylvia.

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Donald's heart stood still within his body, his tongue became paralyzed in his mouth, he could but stare straight ahead of him. Dorothy did not see, just stood as in a trance—like some lovely sculptured figure—slowly came the radiant Sylvia, she seemed to rise above Dorothy, then she melted into her being. Dorothy was speaking and Donald tried to hear—her voice seemed so far away. I am so happy dear Donald, happier than ever before, I feel as if some burden has been lifted from my heart. Then it all dawned upon him—his Sylvia had mingled her spirit with the life of Dorothy—she was willing to share with her, one body,

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one heart and one man. Donald's problem was solved through the love of Sweet William.

We all do fade as a leaf—
The bodies that hold the soul,
Our lives on earth are but brief
Retarding the reach of our goal.
To know we live another day
On a plane near, and still far—
When we discard the house of clay
To walk through the door ajar.
Then is the day of wondrous life
With love and ecstasy for aye,
Without a care of storm or strife
We receive this greater pay,
To live forever and a day
In Spirit World.

FINIS.