

A NEW CAMFIELD NOVEL OF LOVE #30

# BARBARA CARTLAND

## Helga in Hiding



—she has truly become "the Queen of Romance."

—VIRGIL

A NEW CAMFIELD NOVEL OF LOVE BY

# BARBARA CARTLAND

Helga in Hiding



A JOVE BOOK

## **HELGA IN HIDING**

**A Jove Book / published by arrangement with  
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## Helga in Hiding

The Duke found it incredible that Helga should really not understand what he was trying to say.

But her eyes were puzzled, and the way she was staring at him convinced him that she was in fact even more innocent than she appeared to be.

"What I am offering you, Helga, is my protection. I will protect you from being poor and hungry."

"It seems unbelievable that you should do such a thing," Helga replied, "and I assume you would want me to do something in return..."

There was a faint smile on the Duke's lips. "Yes, I would want you to do something for me, and it is quite simple—I want you to love me!"

"Love you?" she asked beneath her breath. "But that is one thing I was told I must... not do!"

*"Barbara Cartland's novels are all distinguished by their intelligence, good sense, and good nature ..."*

ROMANTIC TIMES

*"... who could give better advice... than the world's most famous romance novelist, Barbara Cartland?"*

—THE STAR

Camfield Place,  
Hatfield  
Hertfordshire,  
England

Dearest Reader,

Camfield Novels of Love mark a very exciting era of my books with Jove. They have already published nearly two hundred of my titles since they became my first publisher in America, and now all my original paperback romances in the future will be published exclusively by them.

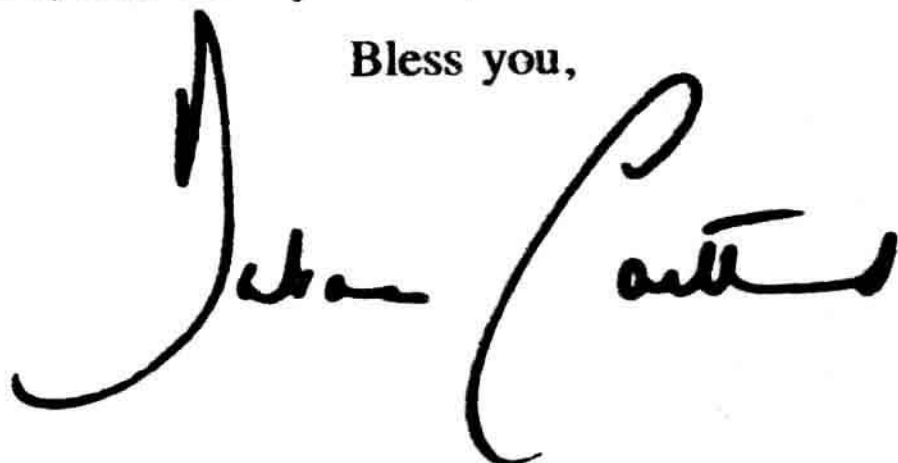
As you already know, Camfield Place in Hertfordshire is my home, which originally existed in 1275, but was rebuilt in 1867 by the grandfather of Beatrix Potter.

It was here in this lovely house, with the best view in the county, that she wrote *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Mr. McGregor's garden is exactly as she described it. The door in the wall that the fat little rabbit could not squeeze underneath and the goldfish pool where the white cat sat twitching its tail are still there.

I had Camfield Place blessed when I came here in 1950 and was so happy with my husband until he died, and now with my children and grandchildren, that I know the atmosphere is filled with love and we have all been very lucky.

It is easy here to write of love and I know you will enjoy the Camfield Novels of Love. Their plots are definitely exciting and the covers very romantic. They come to you, like all my books, with love.

Bless you,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jean Potter". The signature is written in a cursive style with long, sweeping strokes.

## CAMFIELD NOVELS OF LOVE

*by Barbara Cartland*

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| WINGED VICTORY       | SPHINX               | TEMPTATION OF A        |
| LUCKY IN LOVE        | WHITE LILAC          | TEACHER                |
| LOVE AND THE MARQUIS | REVENGE OF THE HEART | ROYAL PUNISHMENT       |
| A MIRACLE IN MUSIC   | THE ISLAND OF LOVE   | THE DEVILISH DECEPTION |
| LIGHT OF THE GODS    | THERESA AND A TIGER  | PARADISE FOUND         |
| BRIDE TO A BRIGAND   | LOVE IS HEAVEN       | LOVE IS A GAMBLE       |
| LOVE COMES WEST      | MIRACLE FOR A        | A VICTORY FOR LOVE     |
| A WITCH'S SPELL      | MADONNA              | LOOK WITH LOVE         |
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| THE STORMS OF LOVE   | THE PERIL AND THE    | HELGA IN HIDING        |
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| BOOK OF BEAUTY       | A KISS OF SILK        | THE PRICE IS LOVE    |
| AND HEALTH           | THE KNAVE OF HEARTS   | A RAINBOW TO HEAVEN  |
| BLUE HEATHER         | THE LEAPING FLAME     | THE RELUCTANT BRIDE  |
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| THE COMPLACENT WIFE  | LOST ENCHANTMENT      | THE SMUGGLED HEART   |
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| DANCE ON MY HEART    | LOVE AT FORTY         | STARS IN MY HEART    |
| DESIRE OF THE HEART  | LOVE FORBIDDEN        | STOLEN HALO          |
| DESPERATE DEFIANCE   | LOVE IN HIDING        | SWEET ADVENTURE      |
| THE DREAM WITHIN     | LOVE IN PITY          | SWEET ENCHANTRESS    |
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| ELIZABETHAN LOVER    | LOVE IS MINE          | THEFT OF A HEART     |
| THE ENCHANTING EVIL  | LOVE IS THE ENEMY     | THE THIEF OF LOVE    |
| ESCAPE FROM PASSION  | LOVE ME FOREVER       | THIS TIME IT'S LOVE  |
| FOR ALL ETERNITY     | LOVE TO THE RESCUE    | TOUCH A STAR         |
| THE GOLDEN GONDOLA   | LOVE UNDER FIRE       | TOWARDS THE STARS    |
| A HALO FOR THE DEVIL | THE MAGIC OF HONEY    | THE UNKNOWN HEART    |
| A HAZARD OF HEARTS   | METTERNICH: THE       | WE DANCED ALL NIGHT  |
| A HEART IS BROKEN    | PASSIONATE            | WHERE IS LOVE?       |
| THE HIDDEN EVIL      | DIPLOMAT              | THE WINGS OF ECSTASY |
| THE HIDDEN HEART     | MONEY, MAGIC AND      | THE WINGS OF LOVE    |
| THE HORIZONS OF LOVE | MARRIAGE              | WINGS ON MY HEART    |
| IN THE ARMS OF LOVE  | NO HEART IS FREE      | WOMAN, THE ENIGMA    |

## Author's Note

THE Gaiety Theatre was a London institution and the Gaiety Girls were unique over the whole world. Lovely as goddesses, they floated to the theatre borne as it were, on immortal sandals, whether they rolled up in hansom cabs, came in their own private broughams, or were escorted by gentlemen with tail coats, top hats and white ties.

As they passed they left a glimpse of grace and beauty and a fragrance of femininity which the world does not know today.

There were all classes in their ranks, some from what was almost the gutter and some from the aristocracy, but each one had the polish and stamp of the Gaiety.

They were selected by George Edwardes, who was the best judge of female charm the world has ever

known, just as he was the best judge of talent. He was the supreme manager of his time and his name on the bill of a play was the equivalent of a hallmark of quality.

Nobody since George Edwardes's days has meant what he did, and one name only since his time has stood for something like the same thing in the minds of the public, and that was C. B. Cochran.

The Gaiety shows shone and glittered and all London flocked to them. They gave London its lighter moments, its laughter, and its glorious girls.

It is difficult now for us to realise, when everything has become so dull and mundane, what these beautiful, exotic women meant to the men who watched them from the stalls and prayed they would be lucky enough to take them out to supper.

The Gaiety Girls were all beautiful, wonderful women but they not only had charm and glamour, but many of them had genuine talent as well.

*More romance from*

# BARBARA CARTLAND

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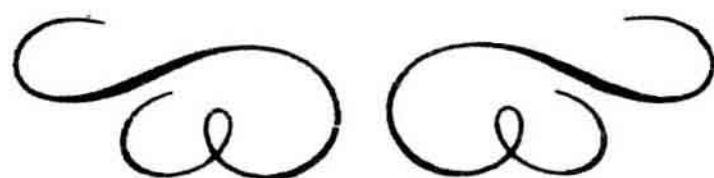
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# BARBARA CARTLAND



Called after her own  
beloved Camfield Place,  
each Camfield novel of love  
by Barbara Cartland  
is a thrilling, never-before published  
love story by the greatest romance  
writer of all time.



March '86...SAFE AT LAST  
April '86...HAUNTED

## *chapter one*

# 1891

MILLICENT Melrose sat in front of the mirror in her Dressing Room at the Gaiety Theatre and wondered how it was possible to feel so tired.

She had come to the Theatre early, as she always did, because it gave her a chance to be quiet before the Show, and also, she knew, to pull herself together.

Ever since she had lost Christofer it had become increasingly difficult to keep up the facade of being a star, not only before the public but also in front of those with whom she worked.

She was well aware that it was fatally easy to slip into being a nonentity and to find herself after all the years of success out of work.

It was traditional for people to say:

“I could not imagine the Gaiety without you, Milly.”

But she was quite certain they would be the first to

say she was "past it," and showing her age.

The mere thought of age made her glance at herself nervously in the mirror, looking for the lines which she was sure were beginning to form round her eyes and at the corners of her mouth.

"Thirty-nine next birthday!"

It seemed as if even the flowers in the room screamed it at her, and it was like a dark cloud hanging over her head.

None of it would have mattered if Christofer was alive, but he was dead and could not help her now.

At night when she cried into her pillow she wished that she had died too.

It was true he had been twenty years older than she was, and she might have expected him to die before her, even in those far-off days when they had both been carefree and so certain that neither of them would ever grow old.

Even now she could hear, as if it were yesterday, him saying to her:

"Come away with me, my darling. I cannot live without you! I know it will cause a scandal, but my wife will divorce me, and when we are married it will all be forgotten and the social world will accept you again."

It had all sounded so plausible, with Christofer kissing her so that she thrilled with a rapture she had not believed possible.

When Christofer told her how blissfully happy they would be, it was impossible to be cautious, sensible, or to think of anything but him.

She remembered how exciting it had been when leaving a note for her father and mother she had crept out of the house one night after she was supposed to have gone

to bed, and Christofer had been waiting for her at the end of the drive.

He had helped her into a closed carriage and they had driven off to what she believed would be a Heaven on earth with no regrets.

"How young I was," Milly said to herself now, "and how foolish."

And yet she knew that if she could put back the clock she would do the same thing all over again, because Christofer had been irresistible and she would have had to be made of stone to be able to refuse him.

She could still remember the little Hotel where they had stayed the night and the ecstasies they had evoked in each other, so that Christofer had said hoarsely:

"How could we fight against a love as great as ours? How could we contemplate life without each other?"

He had been so confident and so had she, when they settled in a small Manor House in an obscure village in Gloucestershire, and they both believed it was only a question of time before they were legally Lord and Lady Forsythe.

But Christofer's wife was made of sterner stuff, and when he asked her for a divorce she refused categorically, saying:

"I am your wife, and your place is with me. When you are ready to return, your home is waiting for you."

"It is ridiculous!" Christofer had raged. "She will change her mind—of course she will! It is only a question of waiting."

The difficulty while they were waiting was how they were to live.

Lord Forsythe had very little money of his own, and

the Trustees of his wife, who was a comparatively wealthy woman, had made sure that, while he had the handling of her income, it was impossible for him to touch the capital.

Not very intelligent over money, he found he was committed to keeping up the running expenses of the house in which his wife lived and which as she had truly said was his home.

It left him very little indeed to expend on Milly.

They struggled in the country for nearly a year, then moved to London.

"I think perhaps I had better find something to do," Milly said a little nervously.

To her surprise Christofer did not immediately refuse to discuss such an idea.

It took time—time during which they worried frantically as to how they could go on, how their bills could be met, how Christofer could somehow extract more money from his wife.

Then finally they succumbed to the inevitable and Christofer returned to see what he could do about it.

What this entailed was that to all intents and purposes he became once again a married man, appearing at social functions with his wife and, as many men have done before him, keeping a mistress on the side.

It was Milly who suffered; of course she did.

The Staffords, who were extremely respectable and had played their part in the history of England, had cut her off with the proverbial shilling, and although she might have crawled back to beg their forgiveness, she was too proud to do so.

In desperation Christofer introduced her to George

Edwardes, and one look decided the most astute Showman of the age that she was just what he wanted at the Gaiety Theatre.

The Gaiety Girls were renowned for being quite different from ordinary Show girls.

In the first place, a number of them were well-educated and besides being beautiful they behaved like Ladies, and had in consequence a glamour that made them outstanding on the stage and sought after by every Man-about-Town who was proud to be seen in their company.

The applause, the acclamation of her beauty, and the compliments she received did a great deal to assuage Milly's feeling of guilt towards her family.

She of course did not use her real name but called herself "Millicent Melrose," and hoped that her relatives would never know what she was doing.

But whether they knew or not she had no idea, since she had no communication with them.

From the moment she became a Gaiety Girl life was far easier than it had been before.

Not only was she earning money for herself, but because Christofer played his part at home as skillfully as she played hers on the stage, his wife became more generous and he had more money to spend.

He set Milly up in a very comfortable flat in a quiet Square not far from the Gaiety Theatre and spent every moment he possibly could with her.

This usually meant he was in London mostly during the week and returned home at weekends to entertain on his estate, with shooting and hunting parties in the winter, and in the summer there was tennis, archery, and boating on the lake.

Milly tried not to think of what he was doing when he was not with her.

She was often lonely, but she told herself it was the price she had to pay for being so blissfully happy when they were together.

Of course she was approached by other men. She was too beautiful for there not to be a constant flow of flowers and invitations to supper which made Christofer jealous.

But it meant nothing to her except that her admirers filled in the hours when he was not there.

There was one man in particular who was very persistent and had pursued her now for nearly six years.

Sir Emanuel Stiener was exceedingly rich, and most of the Gaiety Girls were only too eager to accept his invitations and his presents, which were always very generous.

They fell over themselves to ingratiate themselves with a millionaire who because of his astuteness in business was known to be a friend of the Prince of Wales.

It was perhaps Milly's indifference which made him all the more determined that sooner or later she would be his.

It was of Sir Emanuel Stiener that Milly was thinking now as her eyes fell on a large basket of expensive orchids.

She was well aware that he was waiting impatiently but cleverly for her to get over the shock of Christofer's death before he approached her, as he had before, with suggestions of what a difference he could make in her life.

"I will cover you with diamonds, wrap you in sables,

and cosset you against everything that might distress or hurt you," he had promised.

She laughed at him and replied:

"You know I have everything I want, not diamonds, nor sables, but Christofer!"

Sir Emanuel had made no reply but looked at her with his shrewd eyes, and she thought now that perhaps he had known clairvoyantly that the sands were running out and the days of her happiness were numbered.

When she had read in the newspapers that Lord Forsythe had suffered a stroke while a guest at Marlborough House, she had been frantic with anxiety.

It was impossible for her personally to make enquiries at Forsythe House in Park Lane as to how he was, but she persuaded a half dozen of her admirers to do so on her behalf.

All they were told was that he was very gravely ill, but there was still hope for his recovery.

Of course there was no question of Milly being allowed to see him, and she could only wait and know as the days passed that it was inevitable he would die.

Actually it was her work on the stage that helped her over the shock better than if she had been a lady of leisure with nothing to do but sit at home and weep.

"The Show must go on!" was the old troupers' cry, and Milly played her part automatically.

She had by now become an institution in the Shows produced by George Edwardes.

She had been promoted to having small parts in the main cast, and because her voice was soft and cultured and her diction clear she eventually always had one sketch in which she was the principal.