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A SERIAL STORY BY BERTHA M. CLAY.] "I have lived always with my Aun

Assunta," she replied, "and my aunt was a woman whose heart must have been broken when she was very young, think. She never laughed, she never even smiled, but she hated the Eng-lish. "They are as perfidious," she said, "as Judas. The sun never shines Heaven's frown." She would not let me have any friends. We used to sit for days and months and years in that word. She gave me histories to read. and after many prayers she allowed m to have masters for painting—nothing else; and for many years I have passed my life in reading dull histories and in painting."

"Poor child," he said; "it was not very bright life, was it ?" "No. I have often asked her to tell me where my mother and father lie buried; but my aunt would never inform me. I have never seen my moth-

Sir Jasper's face grew white with emotion. He said to himself, "It is Giulia's child who has led this sad life - who has never known one bright hour." He dared not look at her lest she should wonder at the pain on his "How old are you, Veronica?" he

asked. "I am tweaty, as men count years she said. "It seems to me that I have lived a century in the dark old palace. It was full of spirits who wailed all night through the long, dark passages. When my aunt was angry with me, she said always that I was a child, an ignorent child. I think rayself I am very old, more like a woman whose years are

run than a child." "You will not feel so when you have lived a little longer," he said, gently. Veronica, look round you. This is an English winter. Do you see how white the ground is - how great icicles hang like huge diamonds from the trees and hedges? When the sun shines on the snow and sparkles on the ice, I do not think there is a grander sight in the world." "I wonder," said Veronica, musingly,

"why my aunt disliked England so much—do you know?" He tried to answer her indifferently. "It would require a very learned philosopher to understand all a lady's likes and dislikes," he said. "Veronica, you pay that you have had a very sad life; et me advise you to try to lorget ittorget the g.oomy aunt who seems to have been so mistaken. Just as a flower opens its heart to the sun, open yours to the sunshine of happiness. Will you

"I will try," she answered. "I will Then he pointed out to her the beauties of the park through which they were driving, and then, in the distance. the towers of Queen's Chace.

"Hew beautiful!" she cried. "And see—the sun shines on it; it looks as though Heaven were blessing it." He wondered what she would say it she knew that this superb house ought one day by right to be hers.

"Tell me," she cried-"what do you call this beautiful place? Teach me to say it; teach me to say your name. What must I call you?" And he taught Giulia's child to call him Sir Jasper, while longing with all

his heart to hear the word "father" from "Some day," he said to himself. "I will tell her all about it, and she will know. Then I will ask her to call me "father"-and I shall hear all earth's

Sir Jasper said one thing to Veronica on entering the house. He turned to her with an expression of pain on his

"Veronica," he said, "I want to ask you one favor—that is, I wish to give you one piece of advice, afterward you will know the reason why. I dvise you to say nothing whatever of the nome you have left. People are sure to ask you questions. Do not answer Veronica, looking up at him with the

"I will-I will do whatever you tel And he knew from that moment that any secret, anything which touched his interests, was as safe in her hands as in his own. He never forgot the expression of utter astonishment on Lady Brandon's face as the young girl came forward, with her graceful, self-posessed

"I really thought," she said afterward to her husband, "that an old Venetian figure had descended from its frame. What a face she has, Jasper! It's essentially Venetian, not Florentine - I know the Florentine type so well-nor Roman, but purely Venetian. Her mother must have been a beautiful He winced at the words, but made no

eply.

Lady Brandon smiled as she con-

I am not sure that it is wise to bring a Sir Jasper looked up impatiently; this

"She will never harm Katherine." he said, somewhat sternly. "Do not put ideas of that kind into Kate's head. I want her to like the young stranger.

the fire-place in the Yellow Drawing room, as one of the prettiest apartments at Queen's Chace was called. The two girls were at the other end-Katherine seated on a low chair, her golden head thrown back, and Veronica kneeling on the floor by her side. The two faces Veronica was gazing at the English girl with something like rapture in her face. beauty to her.

"Tell me something about you

home," said Katherine. "The one dream of my life is to go to Italy; but

ronica gave one hasty glance acros

she replied, "except about home. I cannot speak of it."

anything else that grieves you, Veronica," she said. "It must be very sad; you have lost everything — everyone. But you will be happy with us after a time. You shall be my sister—I have always longed for one; and you, will love longed for one; and you, will love they were children of one never tired of caressing it, of twining it round her fingers, of praising it. though you were."

Why should I not? asked Katherine. wondering at the girl's emotion.
"Why should you, rather?" she replied. "You are so different from me. You seem to me like a fairy princess. You live in the midst of beauty and magnificence; everyone loves you; seem almost to worship you. You have the sunshine ever on your head. Look at these bright threads of gold ! You seem to me more lovely than a poet's dream."

Katherine laughed; flattery was always pleasant to her She experences a girt s natural delight in being called lovely. Then she passed her white fingers over the bowed head. "Has no one ever told you that you

were beautiful?" "No; I have never heard anyone speak of me in that way," replied Ver-

onica.
"Then let me tell you now," said Katherine. "You are a thousand times more beautiful than I am. But I am not jealous of you-I love you. Mine is a pretty pink-and-white, healthy, happy kind of beauty; yours is a grand, half sad, wholly imperial loveliness. I am like a rosebud, you are like a mystical passion-flower. There are hundreds of girls like me—there can be

few others like you."
"Is it really true?" asked Veronica. "Am I really beautiful? Tell me, Caterina mia-do you think that anyone who saw me for the first time "I am sure that everyone would ad-

mire you very much, and those who knew would leve you." "It seems so strange," said Veronicaand Katherine saw a light come over her face—"so strange. I have never thought of myself in that way at all. I

would love me."
"Did they not love you at home?" asked Katherine, surprised.
"We will not talk of home," was the reply, uttered sadly. "No; you are the first person in all the world who ever said to me 'I love you!'" "I am glad, yet sorry," said the Eng-

lish girl, slowly.

A strange light came over Veronica's face; her eyes darkened, a quiver passed over her lips.
"Yes, you are the first," she said;

"and because in all my life you have been the first to say to me, 'I love you,' I swear fealty to you—I will be true to you until death-I will be a friend nore than in name. If the time should ever come when I can take a troub from you, or by suffering myself save you from suffering, I will do it or under-

Katherine was touched by the earnest, passionate words.

"How much you think of kind words, Veronica!" she said, quietly. "Ah. you do not know! I have bee all my long solitary life without them For years I heard but one voice, and i never addressed me kindly. No one in all this world has been so utterly "It is all ended now, said Katherine

"you have us to love you." "Yes, it is ended," returned Veronica "Do you know, Katherina, that I could

not believe the world was fair or bright? It seemed to me impossible. I knew that the skies were blue, and that the light of the sun was all golden, but I did not understand the glory and the loveliness that seem common to you. Once. long ago, I found an old book of poems and I read them. They were all abou the beauty and passion and tendernes of life. I thought the man who wrot them-Alfieri-was mad; now I think there was some method in his madness Do you know, Caterina - I like to give you the sweet soft Italian name — that for long years I have had but one thought, and that that was how soon Heaven would let me die?"

Katherine caressed the dark shining "Such thoughts as those have brought all those mystical shadows into vour eyes, Veronica; we must have no more

of them," she said. "Even my name," remarked the girl, has a sad kind of music in it. And so you love me, Katherine? Tell me what o do for you, how to thank you, how to erve you. I will see with your eyes, will hear with your ears. I shall go o sleep happy, I shall wake up happy, thinking to myself that someone deems me beautiful, and that someone loves me. You have brightened all my life for me by your goodness."

"I do not think it is goodness," said Katherine; "with me it is simply that I cannot help it." "It might have been different," re-

joined Veronica. "You might have been angry and vexed that a stranger should come into your home—the very heart of your home, as it were—you might have received me coolly, treated me unkindly, laughed at me, even bems unkindly, laughed at me, even because of my strange dress and strange manners—but you have been an angel of goodness to me. For that," she continued, with the sudden passion that made her so beautiful, "I will give you my life should you need it, my service as the middle of December veronical was quite at home. How she loved Katherine! She had a strange, vague, think now that he cannot only beat any one in the country but that he can beat any one in the world."

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

always, my love if you will take it, my

They formed certainly one of the prettiest of pictures—the English girl, with her bright, fair beauty, her golden hair, her dress of white silk, her shining jewels, her happy, loving, bright man-ner, and the dark-eyed Venetian, with cannot speak of it."

Katherine looked at the flushed face, and, the nking that the subject was one too sad for her, she stooped down and kissed her.

"I will not ask you about home or anything else that grieves you, Veroniant of the content of t

longed for one; and you, will love papa—everyone loves him when they know him." It was strange but typical that she did not speak of Lady Brun.lon. She said nothing about loving her. "Kiss me, Veronica," she said —"not coldly, but as if you were really my own sister. I shall love you as the same striphtened at it.

The same all the same striphtened at it.

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for it seemed to twine round my fingers as though it were living. I took it to my aunt and showed it to her. She tears.

"You will love me?" she said. "It grew so angry. Whenever you see seems impossible; it is too good—it hair like that, she said, 'always pray that England may be ruined by its own gold, by the greed of its sons and the folly of its daughters. Her words come back to my mind now as I hold this

golden hair in my hands. "They were very horrible words, and your aunt must have been wicked to utter them. What harm had the English done her?"

"I cannot tell, but she hated them She was angry that I wished to learn English; but I would. It was strange that when she hated it I should lov it. I think England beautiful. Our Venice is perhaps one of the faires spots on earth, but everything seems brighter and happier here."

"l'apa," said Katherine, that same evening. "I fancy your ward Veronica has been very unhappy all her life." "I hope not," he returned, quietly. "I feel sure of it. I have been contrasting her lot with mine. How strange it is, papa, that in this world things are so unequal! Some have so

much, others so little. Veronica seems to me to have had nothing." He made no reply, but he thought to himself that it was hard, seeing that they were children of one father. Later on he drew Katherine's golden head down and kissed her face.

"You will be kind to Veronica, my dear," he said. "A joyless life is hard And Katherine obeyed him, because it was impossible to know Veronica and

CHAPTER IV.

Defore two weeks had passed Veronica was quite at home at Queen's Chace. Lady Brandon, who had at first been inclined to look upon the whole matter as a misfortune, now began to think otherwise. She thought to herself that the next season she would be more popular than ever. She would b mother of one of the fairest blondes tiful brunettes. She saw that the two girls would never be rivals, their style differed so greatly, and she began to take great interest in Veronica. She went to her husband and told him that she must have carte blanche for Veron

ica's wardrobe. "It is all very well," said her lady ship, "to look like a picture; bu dressing like one is quite a different matter. Your ward must dress like other people, Sir Jasper. I suppose she

can have what money she likes "Certainly," replied Sir Jasper; "She is an heiress, I have told you. She must be treated as one;" and soon afterward he placed in her hands a check for three hundred pounds. We can arrange later on," he added, "about her yearly allowance—at present, purchase or her everything that she requires.' "Her wants are legion," said Lady Brandon: "she has literally nothing except a few picturesque old dresse

that would look very nice in an old curi osity shop." Lady Brandon set to work at once. She knew too well the effect of dress to offer to transform Veronica into a fashionable English lady. Everything she purchased was made after some pictur esque Venetian fashion, and Sir Jasper was pleased when he saw it.

"You have preserved the unities," he said to his wife with one of those rare smiles that so altered the expression o his face. As for Veronica herself, she could

not understand such attention. "All this for me!" she cried, when she saw the lace, the silks, the velvets the thousand little elegancies that make up a lady's toilet-fans and slippers,

gloves and sunshades. Then Sir Jasper brought her some superb jewels—a set of rubies that suit ed her dark loveliness, a set of corals and a suite of diamonds. The girl raised her wondering face to his when he showed them to her. "Why do you do all this for

she asked. He looked down at her, She was looking at him with dead Giulia's lovelit eyes.
"Why? he repeated. "Because
"You will kno

am your guardian. You will know more some day." She took his hand and kissed it is her strange, impulsive fashion. "You are very good to me, and I am

very grateful," But it seemed to him that Giulia's lips had touched him. He shrunk back, pale and trembling. "Never do that again, child," he said

"never again."
She gianced at him quickly, not un-

capricious young heiress—Katherine her every word. Lady Brandon was

their friends and neighbors; the beau ful Venetian girl whose face was a study whose voice was like music, was admired by all who saw her. She went with Katherine to all the balls, the sources, the parties in the neighborhood, where they reigned as squeens. There was no jealousy, no rivalry between them. How could there be, when Veronica worshipped her brilliant young usual, kept up in right good English

style at Queen's Chase. Every man, woman, and child on the estate was the happier for its coming, and richer; Sir Jasper was most liberal. The friends he had invited came, and among them was Alton, Lord Wynleigh, who had decided not to leave Queen's Chase until he had won the hand of its heiress. He conquered after a few days' hard

siege; the lovely, willful girl had plighted her troth to him, and he knew that she would keep it sacred until ing to a crisis on Christmas Eve, as he held her under the mistletoe and de manded the forfeit.

"Give me something else, Kate," he said. "A kiss from you is indeed a favor but I want something more.' "What do you want?" she asked. "I want your love, your promise to

be my wife, your troth-plight. I want you, my darling, to be my own forever and ever. What do you say?" The sweet flushed face drooped before his the blue eyes could not meet his own, the sweet lips opened, but he

did not hear the faint whisper that came from them.
"Kate," he said, "what do you say? You know, my darling, if I thought you did not love me, I would go away now from out of the light of your sweet presence, and I would-well, I should be worth nothing all the rest of my life. You see, Kate, you are a great heiress-that makes all the difference.

"What difference does it make?" she "Just this—that if you were not a great heiress, I would make you love me. I would clasp you now in my arms and kiss you until you said 'Yes'

"But what, Alton?" "If I urged you too much, and prayed and begged of you as it is in my heart to pray, you might think I cared about your fortune; but I do not." "I am sure you do not," she replied

"My darling," he said, drawing her nearer to him, "you trust me; you shall see that your trust is not in vain. Wil you be my wife. Kate?" The answer this time must have satisd him, for he kissed the li

it trembled, murmuring words that were sweetest music to Katherine. "I shall work for you, Kate," he said-"my Kate, the bonniest Kate in Christendom. I will not ask you to marry me until I have made a position worthy of your father's daughter. I have led a useless life, but it shall be nseless no more. I will work for you. Men shall neversay I married an heiress or her money. Kate, your sweet love as made a man of me. To-morrow will be Christmas Day, and in the morning I shall go to your father and tell him. Will he give you to me, Kate?"

"I hope so," she replied silently. "He would do anything to make me

happy."
That was why Sir Jasper sat on Christmas morning as the gay bells were ring-ing, with saddened eyes and darkening face, while the great heart of the world beat high with joy. Lord Wynleigh had waited upon him to make his formal request for his daughter's hand. Sir Jasper listened kindly—he had a great liking for the gallant, handsome young lover.
"What am I to say to you, Wynleigh?

My daughter has many suitors. I should like her to marry the one she loves best." "That is myself, Sir Jasper," he re-

plied, proudly.
Sir Jasper smiled. "You think so. Well, there is one remark I must make. So far as regards 'worldly goods,' you are certainly not

"Never mind that, Sir Jasper," said Lord Wynleigh. "I know it, and am going to remedy it. Do not imagine that I am saying to you, Give me your daughter now at once-my hands are empty, but she will fill them. It is not that. I say, give me the hope of one day calling Katherine my wife, and I will set to work at once. I will make such a name that I shall not be ashamed to ask her to share it. Will you say Yes' Sir Jasper?"

"You speak bravely. You are sure my daughter loves you?"

"Kate says so," the young man replied, "and she never speaks falsely." "Then I give my consent," said Sir Jasper. "But Katherine is too young to marry yet. She must wait a year or two. The child is but just seventeen. Come back in two years' time, to claim

her, if in the meantime you have made a position for yourself. I do not care that you should make money, but I do care for the other."
(To be Continued.) SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

In the sculling race on the Paramatta river yesterday, between Hanlan and Beach, the latter won. Hanlan's day is She glanced at him quickly, not understanding. How should she?

"Have I vexed you?" she asked. "I am sorry, for you are so kind."

"You have not vexed me, Veronica," he said. "Why should you have done so? English people are unused to showing emotion—yours startled me. I am pleased that you like the jewels. I shall be glad to see you wear them when your black dresses are laid saide."

By the middle of December Veronica was quite at home. How she loved Katherine! She had a strange, vague, undetined sentiment about Sir Jasper—a teeling that even she herself could not understand. She was grateful to Lady Results. She was grateful to the strange of the principal betters declined to pay over their losses. The money was finally paid over, however, Referee Elder being positive it was a square race. He said: "I cannot find any reason for changing my decision. I consider myself competent to judge of the character of the contest and am confident that the, race was won fairly, and that the race, and some of the principal betters declined to pay over their losses. The money was finally paid over, however, Referee Elder being positive it was a square race. He said: "I cannot find any reason for changing my decision. I consider myself competent to judge of the character of the contest and am confident that the race was won fairly, and that the race was won fairly and