



The Earl's Son;

TWO HEARTS UNITED.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Drive quickly, please!" Talbot said to the coachman; and as the high-spirited horses tore down the road Talbot tried to recover his self-possession. He realized that he had been unwise in not returning to the court house, in flying like a criminal; but it was too late to go back now. He must reach the house and get to London; he could invent some excuse for his sudden departure. In London he would have time to think, to face the situation and meet it.

After all, there was no danger of the truth being known. He would live to see Ralph Farrington—Lord Denby, curse him!—hanged. He got out of the carriage quickly and went up the stairs. At the top, Gibbon, who had been looking down at him with a keen intentness in his dull, colourless eyes, moved slowly across the corridor.

"Is that you, Gibbon?" said Talbot. "Pack my portmanteau and order a carriage—a close carriage—to take us to the station. I have been summoned to town on—on important business."

"Yes, sir," said Gibbon. "There's no train till the four-thirty, sir," he added in his toneless voice.

Talbot, as he entered his room, turned on him savagely. "Obey my orders," he said, harshly, "and be quick about it. You—you move about the place like a black slug."

Gibbon raised his head and looked at his master's back with a twitch of his lips that was like a mute snarl, then he went down stairs. A few minutes later Talbot, who was pacing up and down his room vainly trying to recover his usual calmness, to assure himself that he was in no peril, heard the man packing in the adjoining room. Gibbon was a long time about the task, but presently he came into the bedroom.

"Your things are packed, sir," he said; "and the dog-cart is waiting."

Talbot faced round upon him passionately; for there is no passion so intense, so ungovernable, as fear.

"You senseless hound!" he said. "I told you a close carriage, a brougham! Go and order it! You'll leave my service a month from to-day and will take with you the character I had with you. Yes; this day month; it will not be very long after that before you find yourself in goal, I've no doubt. Get out of my sight!"

As Gibbon went out Talbot fell to pacing the floor. If he could only get away before the earl returned! But half an hour passed and Gibbon did not return; presently Talbot heard a carriage drive up, and he went to the window and looked out. But it was the earl returning in a fly. Talbot bit his lip and forced some color into his face, then went down stairs, and Tal-

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bot entered the room with an old telegram envelope in his hand.

"I hope you will forgive me for taking the carriage, sir," he said, "but a man brought a most important telegram to the court house, a wire from our chief; I must return at once."

The earl had sank into his chair at Talbot's entrance, and his head was bent, his eyes fixed on the carpet as if he could not bring himself to look at the man whom, until lately, he had regarded as his heir and successor; for, in truth, the old man was weighed down by the shame which should have crushed the guilty, not the innocent. He raised his head at last slowly and looked steadily and scornfully at the sallow face.

"You are leaving Lynne Court for the last time I trust," he said, his voice heavy with the shame and the exhaustion of the scene he had gone through.

Talbot affected to start. "You mean—surely you cannot mean that you intend to quarrel with me, sir?" he said, in a deeply injured tone.

The earl's eyes flashed.

"Quarrel!" he echoed, his delicate nostrils expanding. "There are some men whom one does not stoop to quarrel with. But there are some men one cannot suffer beneath an honest roof. Lynne Court has never yet harboured a liar and a scoundrel!"

Talbot's sallow face grew dark. "You forget whom you are addressing, my lord!" he said, with an affectation of wounded dignity and indignation.

"Would to God I could!" said the old man, with a stifled groan. "If I could only forget! But the bitterness and shame, of remembering that you are of my blood, that you might have followed me here, here where no such villain as you has ever been master! But that—the chance of your following me—has been averted, thank God!"

"I am not so sure," muttered Talbot, then he checked himself and sighed deeply. "You are attaching undue importance to the statement of that young woman, Fanny Mason. Surely, sir, you cannot be so ignorant of the world as not to be aware that a woman of her character is unworthy of credit, is never, yes, never to be believed! Is it not quite a common occurrence for such a woman to lay the blame of her misfortune, misconduct, at the door of some prominent person, someone whom she may hope to blackmail, someone of higher rank than herself, so that her fault may seem excusable?"

The earl regarded him with increasing loathing and disgust. "The girl spoke the truth," he said, sternly. "There was not a soul in the court who doubted her!"

Talbot raised his brows. "Nor would they if she had ascribed her fall from virtue to anyone else—say the prisoner," he retorted, with a sneer. "In fact, I think she was rather foolish in not doing so! She left the place soon after his mysterious disappearance. He is a man of no character—in the eyes of the law at any rate; he is charged with murder—this other peccadillo is a slight one compared—"

The earl's eyes flashed. "You malign him!" he cried. "He is my son—he is not capable of such baseness—"

"Grant it, sir; but why should you think me capable of betraying her?" said Talbot, gravely.

The earl leant forward. "Because a thief is capable of most things."

"A thief!" Talbot retorted. Then he laughed as if the accusation were too absurd to cause resentment.

"Yes, a thief! By what other name can you call the man who steals a will from a safe and destroys it?" Talbot's face blanched and his lips worked.

"You saw—" escaped his lips. "I was awake—I saw!" said the earl. "No more. Wait! A thief is always a fool, but you are as great a one as ever existed, for you were not careful enough to see that the will you burnt was the right one: you burnt the wrong one!"

Talbot's eyes flew to the safe and he bit his lip.

"There is some mistake, sir," he stammered.

The earl smiled a terrible smile of merciless cynicism.

"Yes, it was a mistake. But no

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matter. You are going. It is long since I offered up a prayer, but I pray now that I may never see your face again!"

Talbot's dark eyes flashed savagely; then he cast them down and sighed deeply.

"You are unjust, sir; you wrong me!" he said. "I will write to you from London—I dare not stay—and I will ask you to keep an open mind until you have heard my explanation, my defence."

The earl raised his hand and pointed to the door, and Talbot, with another sigh, passed out.

The brougham was waiting, a footman opened the door for him, and Talbot got in. Gibbon mounted to the box and the carriage drove to the station.

"I'm afraid there's more than an hour to wait, sir," said Gibbon, as he stood beside the carriage door when it pulled up at the steep flight of wooden stairs leading to the station.

Talbot glanced at his watch. "Get the tickets!" he said, as if he were speaking to a dog and a cur at the same time. He followed the man up the stairs, and, lighting a cigarette, paced up and down the platform; his head erect, though his face was pale and heavy; in fact, he looked as he had often looked when the luck had gone against him in some gambling hell.

After a time he grew tired of the monotonous pacing, and, on reaching the end of the platform, he stepped off and walked beside the line, scarcely conscious of what he was doing. No one interfered with him—though he passed a porter and the signal man seated on the steps of his box—and indeed he was in no danger, for the embankment was broad. It was also a very high one, and after about half a mile it led to the viaduct which, at its erection, had caused quite an excitement in the neighborhood, and was still regarded with pride by the simple country folk, who considered it a marvel of engineering skill.

Talbot leant with folded arms against the low stone wall and looked into the valley which the arches spanned. But it may safely be said that he did not see the pretty cooing, with its beech and oak-trees and its silvery stream running peacefully between banks of fern and gorse. So

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MILNARD'S LINIMENT LUMBERMAN'S FRIEND.

far down seemed the sheep and cattle that browsed beside the brook that they appeared dwarfed and as if in a "bird's-eye" picture. Talbot, though he was staring at it, saw nothing of the loveliness of the view: he was looking at the mental picture of the stern, white-faced old man pointing to the door; at a still more unwelcome vision: that of the hated Ralph Farrington reigning at Lynne Court. But no, no! Ralph Farrington would be hanged.

He was awakened from his reverie by a shadow falling across the coping of the bridge and, turning his eyes, he saw that it was Gibbon.

"I told you to wait at the station!" said Talbot in a low voice. "Go back!" Gibbon still approached, so that his shadow fell athwart his masters.

"I wanted to speak to you, Mr. Talbot," he said. "I wanted to tell you that I'm not coming up to town with you."

Talbot eyed him haughtily. "Go back! You are coming with me! I have need of you—strange as it may seem. You fall-bird! Did you hear what I said?"

Gibbon nodded and leant against the wall, his hands thrust into his pockets, his colorless eyes fixed on Talbot's furious face. Talbot thought he was drunk.

"Oh, yes, I heard!" said Gibbon, coolly. "But I'm not coming. I'm going back to the Court, to Lord Lynborough. I'm going to make a clean breast of it."

(To be Continued.)

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- Ball, Miss Sarah Batstone, Miss P. Benson, Samuel, Pennywell Road Bearn, Thomas, New Town Road Bishop, Samuel, Lime Street Brine, Thomas, care Lester's. Bowman, J. W., Clifton House Bond, E., Water St. E. Burton, G. A. J. Buck, James, care Bowring Park Burns, Mrs. M., care Mrs. H. Baird Bush, Miss E., card Butler, Miss Maud, Gower Street Bursell, Miss B., Cochrane Street Barron, John, Waterford Bridge Butler, W. R., Lime St
- C Cahill, John, Newtown Road Campbell, M., Water Street Clarke, Mrs. Maggie, West End Clarke, Miss Flora, Hotel Royal Cullen, J., card, care Gen'l Delivery Chipman, T., Merrymount Road Codgell, Mrs. Chas. H., care Mrs. John White, Bond St. Crowley, Miss Mary, New Gower St. Conroy, J. P. Cooney, Mrs., Field St. Crummey, Miss Amelia, Riverhead Calder, John, Moulder Cunningham, Mrs. John, Sheehan St.
- D Dalton, J. Dwyer, Michael, Nagle's Hill Dickens, Miss Susie Driscoll, Thomas, card, Cornwall Avenue Downey, Patrick, Water Street Dodd, Mrs. L., ret'd. Doyle, Miss Katie, card, Catherine St. Dicks, Charles
- E Emberley, Miss Annie Evans, Miss Lizzie, Prescott St. Edgecombe, Arthur, LeMarchant Rd. Earle, Arthur, 15 — Street
- F Fitzgerald, M. P. Flynn, John J., care Thomas Lanon Flynn, Daniel, late Tilton Frost, Mary, card Ford, James, Ford's Lane Furlong, Mr. or Mrs., Freshwater Rd. Fennell, Roy, late Digby, N.S.
- G Gaspero, Signor Garland, Miss B., Water St. West Good, H., care Post Office Gwilm, Mrs. Greene, Matthew
- H Hall, A., Long Pond Road Hall, Annie, care Gen'l Delivery Hayden, Timothy, care Mrs. Hurley, King's Beach Hackett, Mrs. F. Hemmerson, Rev. D. B. Healey, George J., Water St. West Henebury, Wm., Duckworth St. Hynes, E. H., care Gen'l Delivery Hill, Miss Fannie, Theatre Hill Hynes, Michael, late of Edward Hines, Miss A. Hiscock, H. B. Hillyer, Thomas Hipditch, Lucy, ret'd. Holmes, Const. H., Western Station Hopkins, Mrs., care Post Office Hodder, George Holmes, A. H. Howard C. D. Hutton, A. M., Queen's Road Halleran, Miss Annie, Bannerman St. Holohan, James Hawes, George Humphries, T., Barnes' Road
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- J Joseph, Abraham, late Spaniard's Bay Jones, C. T. Jackson, George, Coronation St. Joy, J. J., card, Water St.
- K Jackson, Lottie, card Jarvis, E. L. Jones, Ernest, Carew St. Johnston, Mrs. Thomas, Water St. West
- L Kemp, W. J., late Pilley's Island King, Alfred, late s.s. Glencoe Knight, Miss Minnie, Victoria St. King, W. S., care Gen'l Delivery
- M Leary, Miss Bride, LeMarchant Rd. Little, Robert, late Brooklyn, B.B. Linton, T. A., Duckworth St. Lockhart, Miss
- N Martin, Mrs., New Gower St. Malone, Mrs. Michael Malmont, Miss Elsie, Water St. MacNamara, H. J. Mathieson, W. D., Water St. Martin, Sarah, card, York Street Mercer, Mrs. Lydia Nosworthy, Wm., Pope St. Mitchell, J. W. Miles, Miss M. Miller, Mrs. Mary S. Murphy, Edward, care G. P. O. Maynard, D., Williams' Lane
- O McLand, W. A., slip, Lime St. McNally, Dan, care Post Office McKnight, F. J., care Post Office McGray, Miss Annie McDonald, Kenneth M., Mullock St. McGrath, K. M. McPherson, Miss Isabella, late Burlin
- P Parrell, Wm. M., care G. J. Carter Parsons, Miss L., card, Leslie St. Parsons, Miss L., Leslie St. Pratt, S. S. Parsons, W. R. Parsons, James Parsons, John, care Gen'l P. Office Pittman, Jas. (or Jos.) Pittman, C. C., slip Power, E. Power, M., Nagle's Hill Power, John Power, Miss Mary, Water St. Power, Mrs. Mary E., Long Pond Rd. Percy, Wm., Water St.
- R Ryan, Miss Mary, card Reid, Forst Reid, Mrs. M. Rowse, Miss Bessie, late Leading Tickers Rogers, Mrs. James, Forest Road
- S Sparks, John Stamp, John Spracklin, Mrs. Haggerty's Lane Stacey, Edward, Collins Lane Smith, Clifton, King's Road Snider, Alex. Scott, Walter Stockley, Miss Sarah, slip Steed, Frederick, Waterford Bridge
- T Taylor, Maxwell, Cabot St. Tanner, Miss, card, Pleasant St. Temple, Mrs. B. H., Portugal Cove Rd. Thomas, M. C., care G. P. O.
- W Way, Miss E. F. Waters, J. W., Park Beach Walsh, Thomas, Nagle's Hill Walsh, Martin, Nagle's Hill Wakeley, Miss Lilly, George's St. West, Laurence Wells, Mrs. Alfred, care Gen'l Delivery White, Mrs. Wm., 11 — Street Whiteaway, Jas. White, Mrs. Ernest, Hamilton St. Wilson, Michael, Convent Square Wall, George
- Y Young, Henry Young, E., late Balsam Young, W. P.

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