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## THE STORY OF A CITY ARAB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BOUGHTON GRANGE."

### CHAPTER III.—Continued.

The promise of such a startling reward caused the boy to open his eyes wider than before, and quickened his steps. That is to say, Lubin advanced three paces from the gooseberry bush, and beckoned me, with a sly look of intelligence, to enter the garden.

'Where be the sixpence?' he said, holding out his hand, when I reached him.

'Here it is,' giving it to him; 'but now, before we go any further, you must tell me a little about Mr. M——. I suppose he is your master?'

'Ees,' said the boy.

'And does he pay you for getting into his garden and eating his gooseberries?' said I.

'I be minding the hogs,' said he, 'I come in to driv'um out o' the glarn.'

'But you didn't drive them out,' said I. 'See they are rooting up the potato rows.'

'So they be,' said Lubin, taking up a stick, and making a feeble pretence of driving them away; 'they houl do't. If I driv'um out o' one gup, they come in at t'other.'

'But your master would not be pleased to find you neglecting your work, and eating his gooseberries, I suppose.'

'Aw, but,' said the boy, 'old M——han't got no legs, he han't.' And the boy grinned wider than before.

'No legs?'

'No use in 'um. He be laid up, and can't stir out of his chair—the old man, he can't.'

'Indeed! But then it is still worse in you to be neglecting your duty.'

The boy grunted that he was minding the hogs, but it was no use to try to keep them out of the garden.

'Who keeps house for your master?' I wished to know.

'Polly Randell,' he replied: 'old master be Polly's grand'ther.'

'Then it is Polly Randell I had better ask to see,' I said. 'And now show me the way into the house.'

'Aw, but Polly Randell is at work out at plough,' said he, moving on, and conducting me, by a circuitous route, through the neglected garden to the back part of the rambling old farmhouse. When there, I perceived that there was a shorter cut to the back door from the straw yard, which I had not before observed.

'There's Polly,' said my guide, pointing to a field at some distance, where to my surprise, I saw a female figure holding the stils of a plough and skilfully, as it seemed to my inexperienced judgment, turning up a deep straight furrow, while the horses were led by a boy.

Without waiting to give any further explanation, my guide pushed open the door, and admitted me into a large brick-floored washhouse. The first sight which presented itself there was the carcass of a large and recently killed hog, suspended, slaughter house wise, by its hind legs to a strong hook in the rafters overhead.

'Polly Randell stuck him,' said the boy;

'she sticks a hog regular prime, Polly doo's. And she'll cut him up to-night, too,' he added, admiringly.

'Oh, indeed!' said I, in some embarrassment, as I was thus made acquainted with the singular accomplishments of my unknown fair cousin. 'But how am I to get to old Mr. M——? Is there no servant within call?'

The boy made me no answer, but, leading the way through the washhouse, he raised a whoop, which met with a response from a shrill voice from the upper regions.

'Come down, woo' ye, Sal?' he rejoined; 'here be a man in a tail-cwoat wants to see master.' And saying this, Lubin disappeared by the way he came, leaving me to wonder what scene would next open.

I had not long to wait. Perhaps the 'tail-cwoat' had something to do with it; but all events, a minute did not elapse before a dirty, slatternly girl made her appearance, and, after honouring me with a broad, gaping stare, condescendingly expressed her willingness to introduce me to the old farmer. I followed her, therefore, through a long passage, and up a flight of stairs into a good-sized chamber, at one end of which was a bed, and at the other a small fireplace and a large easy chair. 'That's the master,' said my introducer, pointing to a living object in the chair, and vanishing as she spoke. That object was my grandfather.

Greatly altered since I saw him last, brandishing his heavy whip over the shoulders of poor Peggy Magrath! He had been stricken with paralysis: he was shrivelled, deaf, and toothless: baldheaded, too, I afterwards found; but