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THE HEIR OF ROMNEY.

BY CHRISTINE FABER.

When Carnarven returned to his own ome that night, old Maura was full of

important news for him. "Sure the gentleman was here, and it's true, Florry darlint; I can tell you

now-I, who have kept the saycret for twenty seven years, thanks be to God. Her strange manner and her stranger words startled him out of his gloomy reserve, and he asked what she meant

"Och, Florry ; sure Kate Dominick must have you bewitched entirely, when she sent out of your head what Is a dangerous disease because it is you've been wishing and praying for so long—to know who you are. The gentleman that was here before came again to-night-the one from England: he's at the 'Arrums,' and he'll be here again to morrow. But I can tell you now who you are-listen asthore, and bend your head close, and don't start when I tell you. Oh, thanks be to God

for this hour ! And the tears rapidly coursed old

Maura's withered cheeks Young Carnarven was now both startled and excited. Perchance for a moment the weight upon his heart pressed less heavily, for he looked almost his own bright self again.

"Tell me, Maura," he said. "Hush, darling, let me whisper it aisy at first, aisy, till he'll tell it to you to-morrow; aisy, till the country'll know it asthore.

She threw her arms around his neck pressed her lips to his ear, and whispered a name

Carnarven bounded from his seat to the middle of the floor and stood there looking bewilderingly about him while Maura watched him with silent, but breathless interest. At length he seemed to comprehend what had been said to him, and if a moment previous he weight on his heart had seemed to lighten, it returned now with re-doubled pressure. With the name that old Maura had mentioned there connected that which would give to Carnarven's future life such fortune as had never entered into his brightest antici pations; but it came too late, since with it he could not possess Catherine

"O God!" he groaned, and putting his hands before his eyes, he shed the first tears he had wept since his baby hood.

"It's the joy that's unmanning him, said Maura to herself; but in a moment Florence strode to the door and saying huskily:

must go outside to walk these queer feelings away. Don't sit up for me," he dashed out into the cold bright

night.
What the communings were which that noble soul held with God and itself, what the agony was which that brave heart endured during that long, midnight walk, no one in this world ever knew save Carnarven himself. But that he had conquered in the fierce and dreadful struggle, was attested by the expression of his face when at length ne stood again on the threshold of his humble home. He lifted his eyes to the clear, cold sky, and said, as if speaking to some invisible being:
"Yes; thank God, I can do it."

The strange gentleman of whom Maura had spoken came early on the next morning to the little cottage. He was a tall, portly man of middle age, and he bore about him all the signs and circumstances "of cultured and wealthy breeding." He was evidently not un-

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> "No one!" the old woman almost shrieked in dismay. "What do you mane at all, Florry? Won't you marry Kate Dominick, and won't you be proud and happy to tell her

held, and said, sadly : "Catherine Dominick is beyond my

expressions as:

extended his hand in greeting and addressed him as "Mr. Devereaux."

Maura respectfully retired to an inner apartment, and Mr. Devereaux seated himself at a table and proceeded immediately 'to business," as he termed it, by taking sundry papers from the breast pocket of his coat.

"I know who I am," said Florence uietly. "Maura told me that much quietly last night."

Mr. Devereaux looked up and replied with a smile: "I shall defer my congratulations,

however, until your true name is publicly known, which will be very shortly, for little remains to be done now. You have but to accompany me to England in order to attend to some preliminaries concerning these papers and you shall be immediately acknowl-

'Stop," interrupted Florence, almost fiercely. "I have not breathed that name once to myself since I heard it, and I don't want to hear it from another yet.'

He put out his hand and drew to him the papers that rested before Devereaux.

"These papers, I suppose, are to rove everything. Without them, prove everything. With

"Nothing," was the emphatic reply.
"Without those papers which you now hold, it would be useless to attempt to move in the case. "Then I shall continue to hold

them," said Carnarven, putting them quickly into his breast, "for I want no moving to be done in this case. I am so content with plain Florence Carnarven that I'll not mind the other highsounding title.

Devereaux sprang to his feet.

"Are you mad, man? "No; but sensible of everything I'm doing. Sit down, Mr. Devereaux, and listen to me a moment, please.' Something in that honest face, in

those clear, frank eyes, impelled the gentleman to obey, and Carnarven resumed:
"I do not forget your kindness to

me when I was in England; and I'm thankful to you for the trouble you have taken to come down here yourself; but I have good reasons for not availing myself of the grand news you have brought me, and I have only one favor to ask of you-to write a statement of my identity, and one certifying that I hold the proofs ready to bring forward any time, and sign your name to the same

Devereaux rose again, saying angr-

"Do you know, my man, that you are throwing from you the greatest piece of luck that ever yet befel a poor

"I understand well, sir, what I am doing," was the simple but firm reply. Devereaux condescended to en

"Will nothing move you to a consideration of your own best interests Think, young man, before you reject a name, and wealth.

"I have been thinking - thinking the whole of last night-and all my thoughts but brought me to one conclusion. that I would be content with what I am. So, Mr. Devereaux, will you grant the favor I asked? You see," with a smile, "I am not renouncing the good things entirely, since by preserving the papers I can command my own at any time."

That is true," replied Devereaux. as if only then had that idea presented itself to him, "but everything is arranged now, and there would have been so little trouble. However, as you are determined, I shall press no further, but perform the favor you ask. Come over to the Romney Arms sometime to day, and I shall have the

statement for you. He departed, Carnarven accompanying him part of the way down path, and old Maura waited at the door

for his return. "Sure it's not Flor I'll be calling you long, darling," she said when he came back, and as he stood a moment on the threshold, looking away toward the cottage of the Dominicks. it's mighty grand the other name will sound. Sure, what'll the Dominicks say, and what'll all the country think

when they hear that you are " Carnarven had put his hand over

her mouth.
"Hush, Maura, and don't talk that way; but come inside, for I've a deal to say to you.'

She obeyed him in a sort of awestricken silence, for when he assumed that tone of partial command, she knew it was the right of blood that spoke in him: the something that made Florence Carnarven, humble and comparatively illiterate as he was, more respected by his neighbors than any other youth of that part of the

"Maura," he said, taking both ber hands when he had made her seat herself upon her accustomed stool, have kept this secret about my birth for twenty seven years, and you have loved me well through them all, have

"You kept this secret for my father's

sake, continue to keep it for mine. Tell no one who I am.

He pressed the withered hand he still

reach now: she is the wife, though secretly married, of Sir Hubert Romney, and I am only her friend."

Maura was speechless from amaze-

ment, that at length gave place to in-dignation which vented itself in such

"The jade—I thought she wasn't resaving his visits for nothing; and to desave you. Oh, Catherine Dominick, there will be heavy misfortunes on you

for this."
"Hush!" said Florence; and one look at his white, suffering face silenced the old woman.

"Promise me," he said, bending close to her withered cheek, "that you will continue to keep this secret. We are all the world to each other, Maura you and I, and you will not refuse

"I'll not, me poor, desaved boy I'll keep the sacret still, but oh, wirra asthru! wirra asthru!" And while Florence went to attend to some outdoor labor, the old woman rocked herself to and fro in mute agony.

Later in the day the young man repaired to the "Romney Arms," and received from Mr. Devereaux the statement he had requested. "Remember," that gentleman said, 'I am always at your service when-

ever you change your mind about this thing, as you assuredly will do, and you know where to find me. Florence bowed, warmly repeated his thanks, and took his leave.

Nightfall, as usual, brought Florence to the cottage of the Dominicks, but he was dressed in his Sunday garb, at which old Larry exclaimed in

The young man smiled and after a secret effort he managed to say, cheer-

fully Yes : and I want Kate also to dress herself in her best. It is a whim of mine to take her out to-night."

Old Dominick was still more astonished, but as he never had a doubt of the right, or propriety of anything young Carnarven chose to do, he neither questioned, nor remonstrated. and while he turned to replenish his pipe, the young man whispered to Catherine:

"Bring the ring with you. It took her trembling hands long to perform their task, but at length she was ready, and the two departed. On the road she asked tremulously for an explanation of his strange proceeding, but he replied:

"Ask me nothing, Catherine, only, be assured that I am doing this for your ood. You'll see for yourself soon."
When he paused before Romney Lodge she gave a little scream, and clutched his arm.

"Oh, Flor; what are we doing here?

"Hush!" he said, sternly, and he knocked loudly at the gate. If, on the preceeding evening, the

Callahans had been surprised at Catherine's extraordinary visit, their astonishment was redoubled at this visit of herself and her lover. And Carnarven volunteered no explanation further than to say as Catherine had done on the occasion of her call, that he wished to see Sir Hubert Romney.

"You can't to-night, Mr. Carnar-ven," answered Jimmy. "He's having a party, and he gave orders that he wasn't to be disturbed."

"I must see him," said Florence firmly, "if I have to force my way to him, and when he reads this paper, taking a folded slip from his breast-'he will not refuse to see me.'

"Oh, if you're as headstrong as all that," replied Jimmy who stood somewhat in awe of young Carnarven, "I'll take your message to him, though I'm afeerd it's a cut head I'll get for my pains. Come up to the Castle, and I'll find you a place to wait in while I see Sir Hubert.

Larry Callahan lifted his hands in astonishment as the three left the lodge, and muttered to himself:

"Sure, it can't be anything else. She said last night it was a favor she wanted for some one, and that some one is Florry Carnarven. But, God help her, and him; I'm afeered it's little they'll get from Sir Hubert Romney.

Jimmy conducted his companions to the apartment in which Catherine had awaited his return from the delivery of her message on the preceding evening, and Florence, as he gave him the paper, enjoined him to say that only the person whose name was mentioned

there wished to see him.
"Never fear," was the reply, "I'll

say no more."
Oh, tell me, Flor: what does it mean? What are you about to do?" and Catherine, trembling convulsively, clasped her hands together and looked

up imploringly to his face. "You shall know very soon, Kate: and now don't ask me any more, but be as quiet and as brave as you can

It would have been vain to ask him further, and burying her face in the folds of her cloak she maintained

silence until Jimmy returned.
"He'll see you," said Jimmy, astonishment mingled with fear depicted in his countenance.

" He was mighty mad at first, but the letter had a wonderful effect upon him, so you are to come with me.

Florence having whispered to Catherine, "Trust me and fear nothing," accompanied Jimmy, and he was con-ducted to the same rich apartment in which the repudiated wife had stood the evening before.

If the grandeur that had bewildered and awed Catherine produced the same effect upon him he evinced it neither in his looks nor manner; perchance the extraordinary errand upon which he had come engrossed his attention to the utter exclusion of all exterior objects, or perchance his sad thoughts gave only their own sombre hue to everything upon which his eyes rested.

Like Catherine had done, he also waited standing, and soon the crimson old lover still."

curtains parted, and the handsome proprietor of Romney stepped within.

His cheeks were deeply flushed either from the wine that he had been so plentifully imbibing, or from mental excitement under which it was evident he was laboring. He held in his hand the written paper that Jimmy Callahan had delivered to him, and advanced with a haughty stride to his visitor.

"Who are you?" he said in tones that he endeavored to render firm and dictatorial according to their wont; but in spite of his efforts they were tremulous from fear, or passion, or perhaps both emotions combined.

There was a quiet dignity and man liness about Florence Carnarven's bear ing that was in direct and admirable entrast to that of Sir Hubert Romney He stood erect, his head thrown slightly back, and his face wearing a fearless candid expression, before which the eye of the titled gentleman involuntarily fell.

"I am the person who is mentioned in the paper you hold," he said, calmly

and firmly. "It is false-false as hell?" thundered Sir Hubert, the passion he had been striving to quell obtaining full mastery of him. His face grew livid, and his hands clenched.

"What! you, boor, to be entitled to that name and rank. I tell you again it is false. They who told you this

tale, poor dupe, have misled you."
His voice had assumed a sarcastic tone

"I hold proofs that cannot be dis puted," said Florence quietly but sternly. "But I shall not use those proofs; I shall not move in this mat ter in any one way but remain con tent with what I have always been, it

you will consent to one thing. Sir Hubert's passion seemed to be

come somewhat subdued. And that?" he asked. "To acknowledge as your wife the girl that you secretly married in Dub in; acknowledge her here to-night before the friends you have in the castle, and acknowledge her on Christ mas Day to all the tenants hereabout bring her old father also to the castle and treat them both well while God

spares them to you.' Sir Hubert bent one of his most frightful looks on the audacious speaker; but the latter returned it frankly and fearlessly

"And if I refuse this most trifling

request?"
"I shall begin my journey to England to morrow, and you are aware of the consequences.'

There was no mistaking the deter mination in those firm, stern accents and Sir Hubert looked for an instant a if he could have sprung at Carnarven's throat, in much the same manner as his own hounds were wont to spring at the throats of their victims; but perchance he was deterred by the fearless

mien of the young man. Why insist that I shall acknowl

edge her to-night — to morrow—next day will do as well," he said gloomily.

"It must be to night since many of It must be to-night, since many of your friends are here to-night," answered Florence. "If they were not here I should ask you to summon them. Your wife is waiting in one of the apartments down stairs.

"My wife!" repeated Sir Hubert sarcastically, "you say it with a good grace, clown, since I stole her heart from you."

Carnarven's face flushed, but he did not reply

"And if I grant this audacious re quest of yours," continued Sir Hubert
"what then?" "I shall remain simply what I have been since my infancy, plain Florence

Carnarven. I shall trouble neither of my withdrawal, and make merry until you with my presence, and no one shall know the secret." "Who knows it now?" speaking

quickly and in tones full of fear. " No one but Mr. Devereaux, and old Maura Donovan, the woman who nursed me and brought me up. "A woman knows it," said Sir Hu-

bert, "then it will be over the country in no time. "This woman has kept the secre for twenty seven years," replied Flor-ence, "and for my sake she has prom-ised to continue keep it. She will not

break her word. . And you have not told Catherine Dominick !" " Not a syllable; and I shall not tell

her while you treat her as it is your duty to do."
"Sir Hubert looked long and earn estly at Carnarven. Such self-sacrifice, such self-denial, were entirely beyond

his comprehension. "Well, bring up my dain y wife," he said at length, "and let the sport begin. I shall wait here for you." Florence with little difficulty found

the apartment in which he had left Catherine. Jimmy Callahan had remained with her. "Prepare yourself to hear soon of a wonderful event," he said, playfully,

to Callahan, and then whispered to Catherine: "Thank God in your heart, Kate Sir Hubert will acknowledge you, and before his company. Come; he is

waiting for us." His words put her into such a quiver of excitement that she could not answer him, and she became so weak from her bewildering and conflicting emotions that Florence was obliged to support her, and on their way to pause more than once, that she might regain

sufficient strength to continue. She clung to his arm even after they had entered the room in which her husband waited, as if still appealing to

his protection.

"Nay," said Sir Hubert, approaching, "that will never do, fair Catherine, and thou'rt married, to cling to thy

There seemed to be an accent of kindliness in his tones, at which Catherine, emboldened, dropped the arm of Florence, and extended her hands to her husband. He took them and pressed them with something of the fervor with which he had been wont to press them when she knew him only as Ralph Deville. Her overcharged heart could contain itself no longer, and she

burst into happy tears. "She will be herself now," thought Florence, while Sir Hubert waited quietly for her burst to exhaust itself. She looked up at length, apparently calm, though her beautiful eyes were

an

still shining from her recent emotion. 'If you are ready, we shall repair to my friends," said Sir Hubert, " doff your cloak, Kate, and put back your hair," for some of her raven ring lets had tossed themselves out of their wonted places.

"And put on your ring," interposed Florence.

" Ah, yes! I had forgotten," said Sir Hubert with a slightly mocking laugh which Catherine was too happy to notice. She drew from the bosom of her dress a little carefully wrapped parcel, and unfolded a valuable plain

circlet of gold.
"Allow me," said Sir Hubert, and with the very courtliest grace slipped it upon her finger, saying :

"For the second time, Kate." She put aside her cloak, displaying a costume simply but gracefully fashioned, and of some bright color which accorded wonderfully well with her splendid complexion; and, as she stood there, having with careless grace thrown her beautiful hair back into its wonted clustering profusion, even her husband admired anew lovely Catherine Dominick.

Sir Hubert's guests in the great banquet hall were somewhat less hilarious during the absence of their host, and they were wondering what could be the cause of his detention, when the great door swung open, and an interesting trio entered-Sir Hubert Romney bearing on his arm a beautiful, blushing girl, who, with charming modesty kept her eyes on the ground, and accompanying them, a handsome young rustic Irishman.

y passed on until they came to Sir Hubert's place at the head of the board. A full score of gentlemen were seated on either side, but Catherine saw none of them. The scene, the position in which she found herself, seemed to her as though they might be but the events of a happy dream from which she might be suddenly and rudely awakened, and therefore she clung the tighter to Sir Hubert's arm, and took

note of nothing about her. The wildest astonishment, the most eager anticipation was visible in every face, and the host, in the pause he made before beginning to speak, seemed to survey it all. Then, bending forward with an inimitable grace of manner, and putting into his voice a strange mixture of playfulness and sarcasm, of frankness meaning, he said distinctly :

"While hinting to you, my friends of my expected bride, I had in store for you a still greater surprise-the surprise of a secret marriage, and to night, my bride has come home to me. Permit me to introduce to you my wife to whom I was privately married during the past summer."

He forced her forward so that her

lovely person was in full view of the admiring looks turned upon it, but in an instant she had shrunk back trembling to her place between him and Florence. Sir Hubert resumed:

"It is incumbent upon me now to attend my lovely bride to her aparttherefore, gentlemen, pardon return. The trio passed down the hall again. and into apartments replete with lavish splendor, while a babel of wondering

remarks ensued in the banquet-room; some said it was like Romney to marry in that romantic manner, and all agreed that his bride was a peerlessly beautiful creature. Carnarvan said he would return to old Dominick, inform him of what happened, and bring him immediately to the Castle, to which proposition Sir Hubert did not object; and when the young man had departed on his selfimposed errand, without taking any further notice of his wife, Sir Hubert threw himself into a chair and

gave full reign to his dark, passionate

thoughts. Catharine was still in too

much awe of him to disturb him, and seating herself, she also gave herself up to thought. "Am I dreaming?" old Larry Dominick repeated, when he had heard the extraordinary story, and he looked up with helpless bewilderment into Car-narven's face. Perhaps there was something in those grave, earnest eyes that revealed partially to the old man how ruthlessly the young man was trampling upon the dearest interests of his own heart, and how much he was silently suffering, for he said suddenly with an accent of tender pity in his

cracked tones : 'She deceived you, my boy, and she deceived me," and that idea seemed to surmount every other thought in his mind. Not even the fact that his daughter was mistress of Romney Castle could dissipate it, and when leaning on the arm of Florence he entered the luxurious apartment in which the strangely wedded couple awaited his coming, he averted his eyes from the splendor about him, looking alone at his daughter who had risen, but whose trembling limbs refused to bear her forward, and who in her supero beauty looked as if she

was born to the place.

"Father!" she cried, regaining strength at last to rush to him and to put her arms about his neck. But he

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