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He rouses himself to reply

"Handsome? Vane? Yes."

"And is he very old?",

perhaps nine years!

"Your sister married the marquis-

should she do it?

is he handsome?"

gravity:

young?"

ried so young."

I suppose."

lead.

Where?

ried next month."

in her mind.

in English-"

Hal groaned.

"Since I was-oh, for years ago,"

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Set or a Peasant pid. Has he dreamed that she said it? It can't be true! He glances at her, man a Peer.

CHAPTER XXVI A MADDENING DISCLOSURE.

She nods, and looks straight before her with a fixed expression. is on a visit."

"Is-is he your uncle?" she asks. She turns her lovely face, with a surprised look in her dark eyes.

A mad kind of curiosity consumes

"My uncle? No." "Any relation?" says Hal, desperate

"No." she says; and a faint, troubled look comes into her eyes, as if she had suddenly been struck by an un-

welcome fact. "An old friend, then?" says Hal "He must be, for I noticed that-And he nauses.

She looks at him expectantly.

"I-I-I'm very impertinent and rough—I always was. I was just going to say that I noticed he-he kissed your hand yesterday."

"Did he?" she says, a little troubled puzzled look coming over her face. 'Yes, he is an old friend. I am going to marry the Count Mikoff."

If she had said, "I am going to be executed to-morrow morning," Hal would not have looked more startled or horrified.

Instead of bowing, with a courteous smile, he stopped short and stared at death, and his eyes starting from his

Perhaps she is startled, for she blushes a deep crimson, which the next moment leaves her face as pale as his, and stands with her hands folded, and her eyes cast meekly down. Hal cannot speak, cannot bow, and so they stand opposite each other, with this awful gulf dividing them.

Then Hal awakes to the situation. and breaks the silence with the insane remark:

"Your horse has got four white

"Yes." she says, arousing with sigh: "do you think he is pretty?" "Oh, very-not at ail-yes, extreme ly," says Hal, disjointedly.

Then he holds the stirrup, and, take ing her tiny foot in his hand, puts her in the saddle, wakes up his own horse, and mounts and comes up to At this modest request, poor, mad-Still he cannot speak. "I am going dened Hal turns crimson, white-all him to put her up in the saddle, and,

to marry Count Mikoff!" rings in his colors.

ainly. I-I wish you happiness; that s, I mean—let us go quickly, let us have a gallop. It's very cold-I mean it's very hot. I--And he strikes his horse a smart

"Wish you-eh? Oh-oh, yes, cer-

low with his light whip. Much surprised and wounded, the animal gives a bound and dashes down the hill; the princess says a word to Florida and follows. But Hal, evidently laboring under the delusion that he is riding a race, gallops recklessly down the steep path and keeps ahead, utterly oblivious of the well-known truism, that strange horses are safest at the trot, and that galloping down

The princesses safe enough; her horse knows every inch of the way, and is as sure-footed as a Spanish mule. She sees his danger, and calls out:

hill over a loose, shingly road is dan-

"Stop-take care!" but it is too late; with a sudden stumble the horse of Der Krone Hotel lurches on one side, and Hal flies over his head like a stone thrown from a catapult. With a cry, the princess throws herself from the saddle and bends over him. "Are you hurt-are you?"

But Hal does not move, lying with his face on his arm.

With a sudden pallor and a succes sion of low, terrified cries she throws herself down beside him, and tries to turn him.

But Hal is stalwart and heavy, and her hands are as powerless to move him as if he were a block of marble. With a face as white as snow, she springs to her feet and looks around

Saving the two horses and Carlo who sniffs curiously at the senseless youth, not a living creature is in

"What shall I do-what shall I do she moans. "He is dead." But only for the moment does weakness hold her in dread; the next, wowan's art comes to her assistance. Taking off her hat, she turns up shallow path until she reaches a

brook. Stooping down, she fills the hat bright chestnut head. After a minute or two, Hal stirs and

raises his head, to her unutterable With a low sob, she slips her arm scrutinizing her. She is but a child-

seventeen at most. Until now he has not thought of her age, but now she There is an ugly cut on his foreseems a child, only a child, and the head, from which trickles a thin is the valued and most esteemed count appears Methuselah-Methuselah stream of blod, which makes her shud- friend. himself. Up before Hal's vision arise der and cry as she wipes it away with the wrinkled face, with its varnished smile, the gray hair and white mustache, and the vision makes him redthink the boy was asleep; and perhot, furious, mad! It is monstrous, haps, in the moment of excitement, Suddenly, without looking at him, she says, with a touch of serious lips on his, kissing him passionately;

not once or twice, but with a gush of sweet, womanly tenderness. It is her soft, warm kisses that wake the moment, is under the delusion that "Old, no!" he replies, emphatically. ing; but, staring up hazily, he sees give him a hearty welcome. 'Not much older than Jeanne. Yes, he her face so close to his, and, raising himself on his elbow, stares about "No more?" raising her eyes with

soft surprise. "And she is quite "Princess!" he says. "Yes-yes! you are better!" she answers, eagerly, a warm flush on her

"A year older than I am; quite a cheek. "My age," she says. "I did not think "Better-what? Ah! that horse! -I did not know English ladies mar-

know! I remember-I mean, where "No," says Hal; "but Jeanne looks are we?" "On the hill!" she says, murmuring older: she is tall and—and womanly, in his ear. "Do not move, do not speak -oh, am so glad-so glad!" and she "I shall see her-perhaps," says the began to cry silently, still holding him princess. "I am going-we are going

to her. in a month. One tear escaping through her fin Hal's heart sinks like a plummet of gers, fell on Hal's face and roused him effectually. "Going!" he says, with dismay.

With difficulty he stood upright, with reluctance, also, if the truth must be "To St. Petersburg," she answers, her, his bright face turning white as in a low voice. "I am going to be mar- told, and then, Hal-like, laughed.

"That was a cropper!" he said, wip Hal nearly falls out of the saddle. ing the water from his face and head "Going-to be married!" he echoes. "Serves me right for riding down hill She looks around at him, still with at a gallop. You didn't fall, did you?"

the little, sad, puzzled look, as if his he asked, anxiously. palpable emotion had aroused a doubt "I? No-no! It was only you who "Yes, so it is arranged. Papa and the

count arranged everything. We have been engaged-is that the right word "That's all right," said Hal, cheerily but rather shakily. "It don't matter,

Then she adds, in a low, musing "Does not matter!" she echoes: "and you so hurt. Your forehead is cut. "He is very good and kind." 'Served me right if it had been worse! Hal smothers a groan again. and I've made you uneasy; that's the "And he's papa's oldest friend." worst of it. Let me help you to mount. Hal graons again, inaudibly, but as "Not yet-not yet," she says, earn-

he says nothing, nothing polite and estly. "Let us walk." conventional, she turns her eyes upon "I will walk, but you shall not," he "Will you not wish me happiness?"

She falters a moment, then allows with his bridle on his arm, he walks slowly by her side. To assist him, no doubt, he put his hand on her horse's neck; and, accidentally of courseher hand, ungloved now, falls there al-

Quite accidentally, no doubt, his hand touches hers; but it cannot altogether be as accidental that his fingers should cfeep around hers and

She does not withdraw her hand: perhaps she thinks it assists him. And are keeping you headachy, sick, misso they go down the valley—the Eng- erable or full of cold. Feel splendid lish youth who is as poor as Job, and always by taking Cascarets occasionhas to make his way in the world, and ally. Never gripe or inconvenience the rich princess who is to marry the Children love Cascarets too. 10, 25, 50

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CHAPTER XXVII BARRIERS BETWEEN.

Forbach, sleepy Forbach, is in a tate of excitement. Its usually quiet street is almost filled with a curious, alert and merry-making crowd; the windows of Der Krone Hotel are all alive with eager faces, all turned toward the road leading from Badenwith water, and, once more bending Baden. The little florist's shop-window over the still figure, she bathes the is quite hidden by a row of whitecapped, red-cheeked village maidens, laughing and talking and eating ripe figs, all three things at once; on the steps of the church itself are gathered sightseers, laughing and chatting. The around his neck, and lays his head on cure is not there, simply because he has gone up to the castle to welcome the great English milord, of whom he

Judging by the aspect of Forbach, her wet handkerchief; so still and alive and vivacious, any one would peaceful is the face that one would think that the emperor himself were about to pass through; and, indeed, she bends forward and presses the er interest to the quiet people of Forhandsome head to her bosom, and, bach than the advent of the great stooping the lovely head, lays her Marquis of Ferndale; for his presence at the castle, with a long train of servants, means a great increase of business and profit-in a word, prosperity itself. The butcher and the floristhim, and Hal, as he opens his eyes for even the little old fruit-woman-rejoice and make glad, and lay waiting he is asleep at the hotel and dream- in the road to greet their patron and

But a less interested motive has drawn the red-cheeked maidens and white-capped, demure matrons of the village, for the story of the marquis' wedding has reached them, and they have come out to get an early glimpse of the bride. They are talking about her now, as they click their knitting needles and glance expectantly up the

"Herr Graff," the steward, says that she is beautiful," says one, with a nod; "very beautiful. There is a portrait of her hanging in the great 6 hall, which milord the marquis painted with his own hand, and sent over that it might hang there before the guests arrive. And Herr Graff says it s the face of a child-a girl-" "Surely not!

"So says he; a mere girl; but beaut!ul-oh, as beautiful as a flower, with dark eyebrows and eyes like jewels. Herr Graff is quite enamored of milay's picture.'

"But is she so young?" asks another. "A girl—a girl only," replies the first gossip, proud of her superior inwere hurt!" she replies, swiftly watch- formation; "but a few months older ing him with wide-open eyes, as if she than the young milord, her brother,

expected he would fall at her feet who has been staying at Der Krone." "Ah, is he not handsome?" says a girl, with a little upraised glance of her eyes. "He is like-like-oh, I know not what he is like!"

"Gretchen!" exclaims her mother who is standing by, reprovingly "guard thy tongue, girl; what is that young milord's fair face to thee?"

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