

The Earl's Son;

TWO HEARTS UNITED.

CHAPTER V.

She wandered along the bank, now and again picking the flowers which jeweled the grass, the murmur of the stream making music in her ears, the scent of the terebene from the fir spinney lulling her senses; and presently she sat down, and clasping her hands round her knees, leant against the shelving bank and gave herself up to reverie; and she was so lost in thought that she was almost startled by the sudden appearance in her solitude of another human being. A man had come round the bend of the winding river; he was wading in the stream, fishing. It was the man whose fate she had been sent to decide. His tall figure was silhouetted against the bright sky, and his perfect ease and grace reminded her of one of Allingham's drawings to William Black's novels; and she watched the movement of his arm, as he threw the fly, with a rapt attention.

He was quite unconscious of her presence, and as he moved up the stream slowly, presently coming abreast of her, she was sensible of a curious feeling of embarrassment, and she was about to rise and go away softly so that he should not hear her, when he hooked a trout. It was a large fish; she saw his eyes grow keen, his lips tightened, as the line tightened, and his excitement communicated itself to her; unconsciously she rose and moved towards the stream, and as he secured the fish and put it in the creel hanging at his side, she uttered a faint exclamation of satisfaction.

Faint as it was, his quick ears caught it, and he looked over his shoulder.

Veronica, half annoyed at her display of interest, said, with even more than her usual hauteur:

"Good-morning; I want to speak to you."

He raised his hat, and came to the bank slowly and regarded her waitingly and with perfect self-possession—so perfect that Veronica almost resented it.

"I have been to Burchett's hut," she said, as coldly as before. "I came to tell him that Lord Lynborough says he may engage you, though your references are not—are not as full as the usual ones."

"I am obliged to his lordship," said Ralph. "And I am very glad. I should have been sorry to go: it's a beautiful place." He looked round at the river, the rising wood on the other bank, the bright sky. "Any man could be happy here."

She caught up the skirt of her muslin dress as if to go; but paused, her profile turned to him.

"Have you had good sport?" she asked.

"Fairly," he replied, respectfully enough, but with the tone of independence which Veronica had noted the first day she had seen him. "Of course, it's too bright; but you can pick up a fish or two in the shallow pools; and the river swarms with them; it's been well preserved and little fished, I should say. It's grand sport," he added, rather to himself than to her.

Veronica looked at the river rather wistfully. "You seem to enjoy it," she said.

He laughed. "There's nothing so enjoyable as sport," he said; "it's the



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only time when a man can forget himself. You can't think much when you're setting your wits against a fish or a fox or a bear. You fish, of course?"

He spoke exactly as an equal would have spoken, and again the resentment rose in Veronica's breast, as she replied, coldly.

"No, I do not."

"Ah, that's a pity, with this splendid river at your command."

"I never tried it," said Veronica. "It looks easy."

"So it does—when you don't know it," he retorted, with a smile which occupied his eyes as well as his lips. "No doubt you think it's easy enough to throw this fly into that shallow across the stream there. Try it."

He held out the rod with a curve of the lips that nettled Veronica. She hesitated a moment, then she took the rod—very nearly jerking the hook into his hand, by the way—and made a cast, and, of course, flopped the fly a few yards from her feet.

"Try again," he said. "You made too sure of it, though confidence is usually half the battle. Swing the rod over your shoulder easily—No, no; not like that! Give it to me; I'll show you."

He took the rod from her and with obvious ease landed the fly where he wanted it. Veronica bit her lip; her blood was roused.

"Let me try again," she said, and she made another futile effort.

He appeared to be interested in the lesson, and he stepped up close behind her and closed his hand over hers as it held the rod, as if he were unconscious of the difference between them.

"Now, let your hand go back," he said. "That's it. There! You have nearly reached it. There's a 'fish' there—"

"How do you know?" she asked.

"I don't know; I feel," he said. "They lie in the shallow under the boulders. Now throw again, gently, and yet as if your heart were in it. Ah! I thought so; you've got a fish. Now, what are you going to do with it? No, don't force it, but don't slacken your line; just let him feel it."

The rod nearly bent double; Veronica was thrilling all over. She forgot that she was the chateleine of Lynborough Court, that this man was only a gamekeeper—forgot everything in the excitement of the moment.

"I shall lose it!" she exclaimed, her eyes flashing, her lips apart.

He looked at her with a faint smile of amusement which, in a subtle way, slid into one of admiration; Veronica, all in a glow, was enough to move a heart of flint.

"Oh, no, you won't!" he said; "he's well hooked; he's a fine fish. Treat him gently. Let your line go gradually; now tighten up. No, no! almost sternly. 'Not so fast; he'll break loose; gradually, easily. Ah! it's a beauty!'"



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"I haven't the least doubt of it," he replied. "Come further up the stream."

She obeyed, as the most docile pupil would have obeyed; and following his instructions, presently landed another fish. He seemed almost as pleased as she was.

"There is nothing a woman cannot do, if she tries," he said. "You have such light hands, such quick eyes, you can beat us at most things—not all; thank Heaven! Now you can understand why I am glad to remain here. Though I am sorry that my character wasn't altogether satisfactory, Miss Gresham."

Veronica had seated herself on the bank and was watching him put on another fly.

"Why is it not?" she asked.

"Ah, well," he said, "in the first place, I'm a stranger, and strangers are always regarded with suspicion. And yet it's easily explained."

"Explain it," said Veronica, trying to speak coldly, even haughtily, but feeling that she had failed; for it was very difficult to be haughty in the presence of this strange young man who was so fearfully self-possessed and unembarrassed.

"It's this way," he said. "Though I am an Englishman, I have lived in Australia all my life. My mother was an Englishwoman. She emigrated with me, a tiny kid. I don't know why. She was a proud woman and a silent. Her husband had left her to fight the world alone."

"You mean your father?" said Veronica, fighting against the interest in his story.

"No, I don't," he said. "I shall put on a blue upright now; some clouds have come over the sky, and a blue upright will tell. No, I don't; I never knew my father. He died before I was born. I meant my mother's second husband." His lips tightened, and he frowned as he bent over the fly. "I never knew him. He deserted my mother before I can remember. I don't know why I tell you this. Ah, yes! You wanted to know why I hadn't a fuller character. My mother and I lived alone. When I was old enough I began to work for her. We were poor and the struggle for existence was hard; but I did my best. Thank God, I did my best! I got some work at the mines. But before that I had been a sheep-boy, cattle-boy, anything that turned up. I earned enough for us both. I was doing well. Then—he bent more closely over the fly so that Veronica could not see his face—then she died."

There was a pause. It seemed to Veronica that she was sharing the

man's grief. She fought against the sympathy, but it was of no use. And half unconsciously she murmured: "She died."

"Yes; I ought to have been glad. I know that now, but I was sorry, for I loved her. After she had gone I took to wandering. I don't think I cared very much what became of me. I got some work on some mines again. One day, as we were sitting round the camp fire, I heard a man, a tender-foot, a new-comer, talk about England. I was English. The man's light words stirred up in me the desire to see the old country. I had saved some money—enough to pay my passage—and I started there and then. When I got to England I tried to get some work in London. A wonderful place London! A heaven for the rich, a hades for the 'poor'! I worked at the docks. I am strong—they said I was the strongest man there—but they didn't pay me more than the others, by the way."

Veronica glanced sideways at his muscular frame, at the handsome face, with its expression of far-away reverie. Despite the difference between them she was intensely interested. She could not only picture the man's experiences, but imagine his moods.

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List of Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the G. P. O. to June 4th, 1914.

- A. Antle, Miss N. retd. Anthony, Miss Eliza, South Side Abbott, Miss Ida, Floyer Hill Adams, Annie, New Gower St. Andrews, Miss Clara, card. A. New Gower Street Alcock, Patrick, Stevedore Arnold, G. H. B. Bartlett, George, Job's St. Barrett, H. Bateson, Miss S. Barnes, J. Baggis, Joseph K., card, Gower St. Barnes, H. J., Forest Road Butt, Miss Kessie, Pennywell Road Berrin, John, care Post Office (Telegram). C. Miss B., retd., 156 Casey St. Byrne, Miss S. Brien, Kitty, card Bolt, Thomas J., care Gen'l Post Office Brown, W. J., Mt. Seio Burton, J. J. Burton, Joseph, card. D. Brushett, Miss Minnie, Pleasant St. Chafe, G. G. Bradbury & Diamond Braker, John, Coronation St. Bradley, John J. Burns, Samuel, Pennywell Road Brentnall, Robert, New Gower St. Brushett, Miss Minnie, Pleasant St. care Gen'l Delivery Ballard, Peter, 16 Simms' St. C. Carew, Mrs. Sarah, Barter's Hill Cake, Mrs. Joseph. E. care Gen'l Post Office Carter, Robert, late Gen'l Hospital. Chafe, G. G. Carrey, Mrs. James, Allandale Road Clarke, Mrs. Leah, card, Walsh's Sq. Clemmens, Miss May Courish, Philip, Cookstown Road Connors, Annie, care G. P. O. Coombs, Harry Colford, Mrs., Pennywell Road Crowley, Miss Mary, New Gower St. Cole, Wm., Freshwater Road Comerford, Peter, Water St. Clarke, L. B. Curran, Miss Minnie, Barnes' Road Curran, Miss Bride, retd. Curran, Mrs. F., care J. Molloy. D. Daley, Mrs. Jas., care Gen'l Delivery Dwyer, Michael, Nagle's Hill Dove, David, Georgetown Downing, H. R., Clifford St. Doherty, Mrs. John, card. E. Duke, Miss Margaret, New Gower St. Earle, Robt., retd. Earle, Mrs. Samuel, Duckworth St. Eley, Miss Emma, St. John's Elsworth, E. S., late Englee Earle, Florence. F. Fitzpatrick, Miss Myra, 30 — St. care Mrs. Cole Fitzpatrick, Miss Kate, City Flaherty, Mrs. Lucas Street Finn, Miss Lizzie, care Mrs. McCarthy Springdale Street Forsey, Alex. Froude, Wm. J. Furlong, Denis, Carnell Street Frost, Miss Violet, Charlton St. G. Gayne, John, care Albert Gayne. Greene, Wm., care Post Office Greene, Lawrence, Allandale Road Gilmore, A., card Gordon, George, 35 — Street Gordon, Gilbert T. Godden, Miss B. H. Hansen, Nils, care Gen'l Delivery Harris, Miss Elsie, Duckworth St. Harris, H. J. Harvey, Mrs. Ann, George's St. Hand, Rex A. Hartory, Stephen. I. care Gen'l Post Office Hamilton, Mrs. Philip. late Walter's Cove, Notre D. Bay Hayes, Arthur, care Gen'l Post Office Hayes, Wm. Hallett, John, Clifford Street Hann, Capt. Albert Haines, Augustus. J. care Gen'l Post Office Hiscock, Miss Jennie, Bulley St. Hunt, Joseph, late Montreal. Hopgood, Wm. Harvey, Mrs., card, Cornwall Ave. Hussey, Wm., Cornwall St. Halfyard, Hilda May. K. late Gen'l Hospital Hennebury, Thos. Richard, King's Rd. Hiscock, Annie, card Hynes, E. H. Hopkins, Mr., care Post Office Hiscock, Miss Minnie, late Hodge's Cove. L. Jensen, Ruth R., care Gen'l Delivery Jeffery, J. N. Patrick Street Joranson, Alex. K. Kennedy, James, Springdale St. Kelley, Miss P., Spencer Street Kennedy, Master Uriah, Brine St. Kane, Miss Minnie, Queen's Road Kearsey, Wallace, Pennywell Road King, Mrs. Albert, New Gower St. King, Miss Gertrude, Freshwater Rd. King, Miss Fanny, Livingstone St. King, J. J., Brazil's Square Knight, A. E. L. Lavender, Charles, St. John's Lincham, Miss Sarah, Rennie's Mill Rd Lewis, Caleb, Mullock St. Lundrygan, Francis, card. M. Layton, Miss Elsie Water St. West Liston, Mrs. E., card. N. Martin, Uriah, Tank Lane Manning, George, card. Moulton, John T. General Hospital Marsh, Miss, Brazil's Square Meyers, Mrs. C., Holloway St. Mercer, Mark, George's St. Mercer, Lizzie, retd. Moulton, John T. schr. Hilda R. Moorell, Miss Mary Molloy, Miss Minnie Murray, James, Plank Road Murphy, T. B. Murphy, J. G. McDonald, K., Mullock St. McGrath, K. McDonald, Lizzie, Maxse St. McDonald, L. H., Leslie St. O. O'Rourke, Mrs. Wm., New Gower St. Oliver, James, Waterford B. Road. P. Pearcey, A., Allandale Road Parsons, Miss, Gear St. Parsons, Theodore Parsons, Emanuel, care Gen'l Delivery Parsons, J. P., Osbourne Rd. Parsons, Miss T. B. Pike, Arthur Pincant, Sophie, Pleasant Street Pittment, Ellie, Clifton St. Piercy, Wm., card, Hayward Avenue Power, Mrs. James, Bannerman St. Q. Quigley, John, New Town Road R. Reardon, Patrick, Bambrick Street Reid, Wm., Battery Road Ring, Adam, retd. Rose, Wm. Robins, James S. Rowse, Bessie G. M. LeMarchant Road Roberts, George, Allandale Road. S. Rowe, Albert, care Mrs. Martin, Casey Street Ryan, Miss, Monkstown Road. T. Shaw, W. H. St. George, Miss Annie, Queen's Rd. Saint, Miss Gerlie, Pleasant St. Stagg, Miss Lizzie, No. 1 — Street Snelgrove, Arthur, care Gen'l Delivery Smith, Catherine Smith, Miss May, 3 — Street Smith, Jacob H., late Trepassy Simmons, Mrs. J., care Gen'l P. Office Snow, Miss B. Snow, J., Allandale Road Spurrell, James Squires, Sarah, retd., Water St. Sullivan, Patrick. U. Taylor, P., late Boot Hr. Taylor, Jacob, care Gen'l P. Office Taylor, F. R. Tenholm, James L. Thomas, Charles, care G. P. O. Thomson, H. C. Thomson, Jas. E. Tobin, George, care Gen'l Post Office Thomson, Wm., Duckworth St. Tucker, Reuben, care Mrs. Kennedy Snow, Miss B. Patrick Street. V. Walsh, Martin, Signal Hill Walsh, Thomas, Long Pond Road Wall, Miss Mary, Circular Road Watton, Miss Lucy, Water St. Way, Miss Lucy, Tremont Hotel Walsh, Mrs. James, Fleming Street Wheeler, Miss Barbara Weir, James, slip, Newtown Road White, Mrs. L., New Gower St. Whinston, G. S., Young St. Wright, George, late s.s. Glencoe Williams, Miss D., card Whitman, Sally, Riverview White, Miss Minnie, Bambrick St. White, Miss May, care Gen'l Delivery Wiseman, Mrs. J., Pilot's Hill.

Seamen's List.

- A. Fowler, W. S., schr. Anale C. Warren Evans, Fred, schr. Angela Marie. B. McDonald, Errol, s.s. Easington. C. Laing, A., card, schr. Freedom. D. Way, Alexander, s.s. Glencoe Fair, Capt. A., schr. General Gordon. E. Butler, C., s.s. Hardanger Jackson, Edward, s.s. Hardanger Yetman, Capt. Wm., card, schr. Hilda R. F. Palmer, C., s.s. Isthington. G. Arsenault, Capt. Dominick. H. Flaherty, Robert J., schr. Laddie Bright, Moses, schr. Lila D. Young Snow, Capt. Wm., schr. Luetta. I. Anstey, Walter, schr. M. P. Cashin Sorenson, Robert S., s.s. Marie Robert Hobbs, Thomas, schr. Mary Duff. J. Haines, Alfred, schr. Novelty Benson, Capt., schr. Novelty. K. Grealey, S., s.s. Ramore Head Richardson, Capt., s.s. Riverdale. L. Faulkner, Roy, s.s. Sindbad Maldine, Isaac, schr. S. E. Inkpen Gover, Germaine, schr. Success. M. Gooley, E., schr. Togo Percy, George, schr. Togo. H. J. B. WOODS, P.M.G.

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