

THE USURPER

"Well, well, I can understand your disappointment. But is not given to all of us to succeed; and on those of us whom Fortune favors is bestowed the privilege of helping those near and dear to us. You must let me help you."

Neville stopped short and looked at him in the semi-darkness. "You offer to help me?" he said. "Certainly, my boy; what more natural? Do you think I am lost to all sense of kinship, that I forget we are brothers?"

"Half brothers, please," said Neville, grimly. "Just so, and I cannot forget that our father did you—yes, I will say so candidly—a wrong. You know that he—did not mention you in his will?"

Neville's face flushed. Oh, why had he promised Trale to keep quiet, and leave the working out of affairs to that astute inspector! Why couldn't he seize this smooth, oily gentleman by the shoulder and shake him!

"Yes," said Neville, "I did my best to induce our father to be reconciled to you—to leave you, at any rate—a competency, but he was immovable. He would scarcely permit me to mention your name. But we will not speak of that; it can only sadden both of us. Tell me your plans, Neville?"

"My plans?" growled the young man. "Yes," said Jordan, blandly. "Do you intend to remain in England? Ah! I am afraid not. I have always noticed that when a man has taken to wandering he cannot settle down; once a globe-trotter, always a globe-trotter, and I suppose you are already thinking of starting off for somewhere?"

Neville was silent. "Silence gives consent! I feared that would be the case! Well, well! After all, a roaming life has its charms. But you must let me help you. I think I may say without immodesty that I have some interest, you know—or perhaps you don't know that I am in the Cabinet?"

"For the life of him, he could not keep a tone of proud superiority out of his smooth voice. "Oh, yes," said Neville, grimly. "I know, I saw you one night coming out of Audrey's house—or the Marlowe—to your carriage, and heard the crowd shout for the great Sir Jordan Lynne."

"Indeed, Really, now! And you did not come forward and make yourself known! I am afraid you are proud! Beware of pride—"

Neville stopped, restrained himself, and strode on. "Well, yes, I have some influence," resumed Jordan, little guessing how narrow a squeak he had had of being shaken, "and I must use it. I must get something for you, some place abroad. A consulate, or something of that kind. And—meanwhile you must come and live at the Court."

"No!" Restless and anxious to be on the move already? said Jordan, pleasantly. "Well, well! I am sorry. You must let me make you an allowance—no refusal! You must indeed!"

"His quick ears had heard a footstep behind him. He looking round and saw a man's figure crouching stealthily under the shadow of the hedge, and his heart leaped as he recognized Jim Banks.

"They were in the avenue now; the lights of the village glimmered in the distance. He glanced over his shoulder stealthily, and was silent for a moment or two, then he went on.

"Yes, you must not allow your pride to come between us. You must not forget that I am your brother."

"Half brother," said Neville again, grimly. "Jordan laughed softly. "Son of the same father!" he said. "I cannot forget it, if you would. I shall esteem it a favor if you will accept"—he paused. "Shall we say two hundred a year?"

Neville stopped again and looked at him. This man who had robbed him of five or six thousand a year, generously offered him two hundred! He laughed—actually laughed—a laugh that made Jordan shrink away from him.

He saw Neville striding along, and Jim Banks following like a shadow. He saw Banks gain on him, and crouch as if ready for a spring, something gleaming in his hand.

"Kill him! Curse him! Kill him!" broke from Jordan's white lips; and at that moment, though he could not have heard the injunction, Lavarick rose as if to spring.

But as he did so, Sir Jordan saw another figure emerge from the darkness and join Neville. It was Trale. Lavarick saw it, too, and he stopped, and slunk back into the hedge.

Jordan waited a moment, watching Neville and Trale walk off together, then with a bitter sense of disappointment he turned in at the lodge gate.

CHAPTER XXIV. Neville tossed and rolled through the night, but, strange to say, it was not the thought of Jordan's villainy which kept him from the sleep which knits up the raveled sleeve of care. It was Sylvia.

"Her brother!" he thought. "That's all I am to her. Just her brother, nothing more! She wouldn't have flown to me, and made so much of me, if—if she cared for me in any other way. And why should she care for me in the way I want! A lovely, radiant creature like her—she looked like a young princess!—and famous, too! No doubt there are dozens of men in love with her, belted, earls and swells of that kind. And perhaps there's one she cares for!"

In the morning Trale came round to Mrs. Parsons, and found Neville pacing up and down restlessly in front of the cottage.

"Mr. Neville," he said, in an excited whisper, "I've found him!" "Found him? What?" said Neville, starting. He was too much engaged thinking of "her" to have any room for any reflections about a "him."

"Why, Jim Banks!" said Trale, looking round cautiously. Neville's eyes flashed, and his interest awoke.

"When—how?" "Last night," said Trale. "One of my men came upon him at an inn outside the village, where he was drinking heavily, and sent me word. He is keeping his in sight. We'll give him just rope enough; we'll just see what he means to do."

"And lose him!" said Neville, grimly. "Not this time, sir," responded Trale, confidently. "I've told my men to knock him on the head and handcuff him, if necessary. No, don't you be afraid, Mr. Neville; I've got him this time. If you can only manage to keep civil to Sir Jordan for a little while longer!"

"It's a large order, but I'll try," said Neville, doubtfully. "Do, sir, do!" pressed Trale. "I'm hoping to catch 'em both so tight that they can't shuffle out of it. I'm off now, Mr. Neville. Don't be surprised to see me at any moment."

Neville walked down to the inn to spend the time, but he was told that Lord Lorrimore had gone out, and after hanging about still thinking of Sylvia, he made his way to the cottage. As he entered the avenue he saw Lord Lorrimore in front of him, and soon overtook him.

Lorrimore looked grave and anxious. "Mr. Lynne," he said, almost at once, "last night when I stated my intention of leaving England immediately, you said 'don't.' Will you tell me your reason? Excuse the abruptness of the question, but—well, you see how it is with me."

"Yes, I do," said Neville, "and that's why I said 'don't.' Lord Lorrimore, I want you to believe that I've good reasons for asking you to stay awhile, but that I can't give them."

"It is something in connection with—Miss Hope?" "I'm assented Neville. "Look here, Lord Lorrimore, any one can see that Audrey is not happy, that—that, in short, her engagement to me—to Jordan is not making her happy, and that—well, don't you think it is possible that it may be broken off?"

Lorrimore's face lighted up with the hope that rose in his heart. "You think it may?" he said. "No, I don't think; I'm certain," said Neville, gravely.

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Full yard wide worth \$1.50 and \$1.65 yard for 98c

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Sole Agents for the Trefousse Kid Gloves, every pair fitted and guaranteed.

Trefousse 8 Button \$2.15 pair
Trefousse 16 Button \$3.25 pair

A beautiful fine French Glove Kid in 8 button length, come in greys, blacks, browns, tans, whites, a nice glove for coat sleeve, every pair guaranteed and fitted, regular \$2.75, for \$2.15

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4 1/2 inch pure Silk Taffeta and Satin in Duchess Ribbons in navies, greys, browns, cardinals, greens, pinks, skies, blues, helios, champagne, dark reds, purples, every leading shade for millinery, regular 29c and 35c, on sale for 19c and 29c yard

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15 Wool Squares, size 43 3/4 yards, large size, very serviceable quality, assorted colorings, worth \$6.00, special for Saturday \$6.25

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14 Tapestry Squares, size 34 1/2 yards, bright, saleable patterns, rich colorings, worth \$8.50, special for Saturday \$7.98

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9 only Imitation Turkish Squares, size 34 1/2 yards; reversible, Oriental colorings, worth \$12.00, special for Saturday \$9.75

Tapestry Sample Ends 65c
40 Tapestry Sample Ends, 14x19 1/2 long, elegant colorings, suitable for rugs, worth \$1.25, special for Saturday 65c

Velvet Sample Ends 98c
50 Velvet Sample Ends, 14x19 1/2 long, rich colorings, worth \$2.00, special for Saturday 98c

Wilton Sample Ends \$2.25
23 Wilton Sample Ends, 2 yards long, 1 1/2 yards wide, worth \$3.00, special for Saturday \$2.25

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