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CHAPTER VIII.

lead a life of selfishness, and neglect all one's duties? Bobby says- But I must not repeat it." "Please do!" he said.

it your brother said?" Decima shut her lips close for

moment, then she said: "Oh, I do not suppose Lord Gaunt would care who repeated the story, that while he can not find any time or money to devote to the beautiful place, he can afford the time and Gaunt. "It is steeper than it looks, and money to spend in pleasure and the grass is short and slippery. Will gambling. Is it true that he won-what you give me your hand?" was it, fifty thousand pounds off a Russian prince?—I forgot his name— can manage quite well; I shall not Decima." and that he thinks of nothing but fall." amusing himself? I hope it is not

large a sum as you mention. Twenty under her feet, and she slipped. Gaunt was the amount, and he lost it, not won was by her side, and his hand went by Bobby and Bright, who were for it. And as to devoting his life to the out and caught her arm, almost as it their part discussing the strangeness pursuit of pleasure"-he paused and had done at the lion's cage at the Zoo. of Lord Gaunt's sudden and unanlaughed, a laugh of grim irony-"if he Decima looked up at him with a laugh does, his devotion does not meet with its reward."

"You know Lord Gaunt?" said De-

Gaunt was silent for a moment. Now I was nearly down, was I not?" was the time to say, "I am Lord Gaunt"-or, rather, it was not the face, and smiled-without irony or sartime. How could he distress her by revealing himself after her denunciation of him? No; he would not diswould have parted from her, and she his clasp relaxed. would remain in ignorance of his identity—at any rate, till he had gone; you catching all Lord Gaunt's fish?" and so he would spare her the embarrassment which would overwhelm and without looking round. "Don't her if he made himself known. He kick up such a shine, or you'll frighten once more

Meanwhile, Decima waited for her answer.

well," he said, as if suddenly awaken- went up to Bobby. ing from a reverie. "There is something to be said for him like the rest lid of the basket. of us, Miss Deane. He is rather an-an unhappy man."

"How can he be happy?" said De-laren't they? There's a big one just cima, with her frank eyes fixed on his over by that bush, and I've been trying face. "No one can who neglects his for him for the last ten minutes; but duty. Why does he not come and live I can't get him." here and try to make others happy? Perhaps he would find his own hap- said Gaunt. piness then."



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GERALD S. DOYLE. Water St., St. John's Gaunt looked at her with his wears

"I'm half inclined to think he might be persuaded to do so, if he heard you. Miss Deane. Decima flushed slightly and frowned

"Oh, I! It does not matter what

think. I am only a girl, and quite ignorant; and-and I ought not to have said what I did. But-but- How did. come to say it?" "You have sald nothing wrong or in-

discreet," he said, more gently than "Do you not think it is heartless to he had as yet spoken. "Every word you uttered was true and just, and I know that he would be the first to admit it Think no more of it-or him. Here is your brother-and, as I prophesied, quite absorbed in his fishing."

They had reached the end of the road, and were standing on the crest of a steep little hill, at the bottom of which Bobby was busy flogging the stream.

"Mind how you go down,"

"Oh, no; thanks!" said Decima. "I

She began to descend with her light, firm step; but, suddenly, she trod on ing any response to the introduction. "Not quite," he said. "It was not so, a small stone which rolled away from -the laugh of a girl whose heart is the temptation to conceal myself was still in her keeping, and who has not very strong. If Mr. Bright had not learned to thrill at any man's touch. "That serves me right for boasting!

> He looked at the sweet, laughing casm this time.

"Better take my arm." he said. "Oh, no: thanks: I am going to run cover himself. In a few minutes he down," she said; and she started as

"Well, Bobby!" she exclaimed. "Are "'Sh-sh!" said Bobby, rebukingly,

him would suffice, and then for Africa I throw, or you'll have it in your hair or your clothes." of the fishing line as it flew back and me."

round in its graceful curve, and Gaun "Any sport?" he said, raising the

Bobby nodded. "Very fair. But they're rather small

"You don't quite reach, do you?

"No, I don't," admitted Bobby. far as I would like; the fly falls about thing but-How can I convince you, yard short of where he is feeding.

You try." Gaunt hesitated a moment, then took the rad and threw the fly.

"It it there? Ah, yes; I see him." "And have got him!" exclaimed Bobby, with a flash of excitement. "I fully. say, what a fly you throw! That was splendid!"

Count handed him the rod but Rob. hy shook his head determinedly.

"Not much! You hooked him, and you ought to land him. It's a beauty! raised his head and said, quietly: Here. Decie: come and see your first for ever so long."

Decima ran up and stood watching the business, little guessing the skill with which Gaunt was playing the big trout, but understanding enough of the operation to share in Bobby's xcitement.

"Oh, what a splendid fellow!" she exclaimed, as Gaunt brought him to the bank and Bobby slipped the net under him.

"Thank you," said Gaunt, handing the rod back to Bobby. Bobby laughed.

"You throw a beautiful fly, sir," he said. "Are you staying here? If so, I'll ask Bright—the steward—to give you permission to fish Halloo! here he is!" he broke off as a short, thick-set man, with a pleasant, good-humored face, came round the hill. "Hi, Bright! how are you? Just look at this fish! This is my sister. Decima, this is Mr. Bright. This gentleman caught him. Why, what's the matter?" he broke off; for Mr. Bright's face, as he turned to "the stranger," had grown red with surprise and delight, and raising his bat, he came forward with an

eager exclamation of-"Lord Gaunt!"

CHAPTER IX.

For an instant, but an instant only, Gaunt looked agnoyed and embarrass-

shook hands with the stew

"How do you do, Bright?" he said. Taken you by surprise, you see." Bobby stared, then emitted a low whistle, and grinned. But Decima's face wore no smile. It was red for a moment, then very pale, and her eyes sought Gaunt's, then hid themselves under their long lashes.

This man, to whom she had been abusing Lord Gaunt, was Lord Gaunt himself! Humiliation, shame, and confusion fell upon her and seized her in their clutches while one could count twenty; then something like resentment and anger took their place; and she drew back and turned her face away. But she could hear Lord Gaunt talking steadily and slowly, as if to afford time for the embarrassment to

"Yes: I should have written to say was coming, Bright, but I-well, I didn't make up my mind until the last moment."

"Delighted to see you, my lord," said Mr. Bright, "notice or no notice. Of course. I should have preferred a short warning. The house-well, I'm' afraid the house is scarcely fit to receive you."

"That's all right," said Gaunt. "I shall not stay long: half an hour." Mr. Bright looked at Bobby and De-

"This is Mr. Deane, of the Woodbines, a neighbor of yours, my lord," he said. Lord Gaunt held out his hand to

Bobby, upon whose face the grin still flickered. "Very glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Deane," he said.

"Thanks," said Bobby; "and I'm glad to be able to thank you for the permission to fish. This is my sister Lord Gaunt went up to Decima, who

stood perfectly still and without mak-"I can not hope for forgiveness this time!" he said in a low voice, unheard nounced visit. "But you will admit that turned up, I should have got away without your learning that I was the heartless' owner of Leafmore." The tears of vexation were very

near Decima's eyes. "It does not matter," she sadi, with little, a very little, catch in her breath. "It does not matter in the very least. But-but I think you might have stopped me when I was talking of you yourself, not knowing that—that you were Lord Gaunt."

"I might," he said; "but it would have given me pain to reveal myself; and-well, we men all shrink from would leave her when they reached every trout in the river! What fear- pain, you know. However, you said nothe river, and cut across the meadows ful ignorant things girls are! Keep thing that was unjust or uncharitable; to Bright's house. Half an hour with out of sight; and mind the hook when and if it will console you, let me assure you that the truths you uttered have done me some good. For once, at any Decima withdrew out of the radius rate, I have seen myself as others see

> "Are you still-mocking me?" she said: and there was something in her voice which brought the color to Gaunt's face.

"Mocking you?" he said, and his voice rang deep and low and full of pain. "Great Heaven! don't you see that I am burning with shame of my cowardice? that I would now give the world if I had had the pluck to own up? My dear young lady, there is no mockery of you in my mind; nothing can throw fairly straight, but not so but respect for your denunciation, no-

prove-" Mr. Bright approached

"Will you come up to the Hall, my ord? I have so much I should like to say, and-and-you said something about half an hour." He ended regret-

Lord Gaunt was looking at Decima's averted face. He turned his eyes to the ground, and, at last, as if he were awakening from a brown study and had come to a sudden resolution, he

"I will come to the Hall, Bright. I trout being killed. This gentleman's can't give you more than half an hour hooked the beggar I have been trying to-day; but I shall be down in a few days."

"Down?" said Bright, with a flush of eagerness. "Do you mean that-that?" Gaunt nodded.

(To be continued.)



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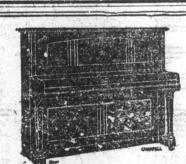
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