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# The Heir?

CHAPTER XLIV (Concluded.)

ET me go!' he gasped. struggling with her; but the long hands seemed endured with the strength of a blacksmith's, and gripped him like a vise, of flesh and bone; gripped him as if they were some sinuous snake, choking and strangling him. He raised his hand and struck her; but she seemed as if she did not feel the blow; and as they struggled and writhed they drew nearer and nearer the edge of

'Take care !' he ga:ped. 'You'll have us both over, you devi! Let me go! I'll give you the jewels; I'll marry you-curse you!'

It was his last word. Blinded by her fury, indifferent to her own danger she had dragged him. There was a cry, a faint, stifled cry, then all was

\* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* One day, about a year later, a party of four was making its way through



the Australian pine forest, which a boy and servants at the beginning of the | had softly fallen. forest, for two of the party were makbeen happier in his death than he had Cottie's affection had brightened and soothed the hours of his departure, and had won the heart which had been so hard to all the rest of the world. These two walked hand in hand,

looking about them with eyes which saw not only the present but the past; and every now and then those eyes turned toward; each other with a long and meaning look.

'It is just the same,' said Geoffrey, in a low voice. Just the same, Cottie! Very probably no human foot has trodden here since we left; how plainly it all comes back to me!'

'And to me,' said Cottie, in a low voice. 'I have it, Geoff! I dream of it very often. And what wonder? for it was here that you and I were so happy. We've been happy since-

'Ah, yes!' he whispered. - But sometimes I wonder whether we have ever been happier or ever shall be happier than we were then.' 'And yet we didn't know,' he

'No.' The colour came to her face, and she looked at him shyly. 'I didn't know-and yet sometimes my heart seemed to suspect that I loved you with a love different to a brother's. It was when you were very close to me, touched me. something used to flame up within my heart, something used to thrill ne.' Her voice broke, and his arms went round her, and she hid her face against his breast.

They were nearing the hut; but for his friend, Geoffrey, Lord Starand girl, weary and footsore, had before they went to it they turned borough, had cleared away all Sir treaded on that night which would aside to a little clearing and stood Edwards money troubles—when they tre parties, with suppers to follow, ever remain green in the mind of one hand in hand over a grass-grown came back to the hut, found the pair which made even the most sybaritic of them. They had left their waggon mound upon which the pine leaves thus, and drew back as if loath to in- of his followers gaze with astonish-

It was Ronnie's grave. They stood ing a pilgrimage which was as sacred looking down at it, Cottie's eyes to them as that which wends every blinded with tears, then he drew her and, looking over her bent head, year to Mecca. The evening was away, and they went down towards cried: drawing nigh, and Geoffrey and Cottie | the hut. The grass had grown round walked hand in hand; for Eva and the threshold; the climbing plants Edward Rashleigh had discreetly ling- had almost covered the window. It ered a little behind. They were plain was evident that no one had been Geoffrey and Cottie no longer, but there since they left; and Geoffrey Lord and Lady Starborough, for the drew a breath of relief and satisfacearl had been gathered to his fathers | tion as he unlocked the door. They soon after their marriage, and had went in and stood looking round, then Geoffrey hastily gathered some been in all his life, for Geoffrey's and | wood together, piled it deftly on the hearth and set it alight, drew up a chair to the table, and gently forced her into it. They were still bride and bridegroom, and she was still shy Starborough; eh, Eva?' under his touch and glance; and she looked up with a burning blush as he said, in loving accents:

'Now get your books, Ronnie we'll have a lesson!'

Edward and Eva Rashleigh-Ed ward more buoyant and light-hearted than ever; and with a good cause,

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trude upon so sacred a moment. But Geoffrey, with a love that knows no shame, drew his bride to his breast,

'Welcome to the hut! Come in! We are all at home-Geoffrey and

ed round with flashing, eager eyesfor this was the sort of thing he had always longed for; and he had still before him the prospect of going over the gold claims in the Western Hill.

'By George! this is first-rate!' he exclaimed. 'Good Lord! how I envy you! To think of having lived here, and found gold! I call it living, Lady

Cottie had flown from Geoffrey to Eva, the friend of her heart, the true and tried friend, and she looked over Eva's shoulder, half-laughing, half crying; for the spell of the past was upon her, and it was the present that seemed a dream and all unreal.

'Not 'Lady Starborough,' she said, checking a sob which burst from a heart o'erbrimming with happiness. 'Not 'Lady Starborough,' but Ron-I am Ronnie here, at any rate!

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Mrs. Edwin Martin, Ayer's Cliff, Que., writes,—'Before I began using Dr. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food I was "The right honourable member and the property of the prope his satellites" -he thundered, glar a sudden interruption threw him for once off his balance. Amid the tense silence Disraeli leaned forward, murmured sweetly the word "satellites" and Gladstone, bowing to the courtesy, proceeded with his denunciation

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# IMPOSTOR.

CHAPTER I.

BEFORE THE BEGINNING

ORD of himself: that heritage of woe!' Byron, when he wrote the pregnant line, knew the grim truth that lay in it; but what youth of twoand-twenty, with the world at his feet, health in his veins and the desire of life in his heart cares for axioms, true or false?

Certainly not Talbot Woodleigh, on whom the world was smiling as the world can smile on youth, strength and desire when they are embodied in one on whom the gods have bestowed most of the good gifts in their magic purse.

Talbot was not only young and 'fayre to see,'' but the only son of a baronet, who was reputed to be the wealthiest of his rank and who idolized his son. It is not wise to spoil one's children, and the folly of the thing was exemplified in Talbot Woodleigh. His father had sent him to Eton with his pockets full of money and an allowance which was increased when he passed from the PLUC: classic school fields of that aristocratic nursery for the rich and noble to Oxford. From Oxford he had sallied forth into the world with the golden spoon still protruding from his mouth.

And London, the society which is so delightful-and so dangerous-at once followed his father's example and spoiled him. Mothers with marriagable daughters received him with a welcome that was loving in its warmth; men, old and young, met nim halfway, sought his acquaintance and cultivated his friendship. The ociety and the sporting papers kept his name in type and chronicled the winnings and the losings of the handsome young heir to the Woodleigh baronetcy and vast wealth.

He had the most expensive rooms n the Albany, rode the best horses money could buy, gave entertainments which were the talk of the town: dinners, lunches, picnics, thea-Talbot Woodleigh was one of the mos -voung men of his day; and his fath er looked on proudly and stretched out no hand to stay.

For some time it was a life of dissipation in which the feminine interest did not enter, or so slightly as to be of little consequence. A marriage would have saved him; but, Talbot had nc time to think of matrimony, and no girl-that is, no lady-of the many who were presented at his head had power to hold his restless fancy.

After all, two-and-twenty is an early age for a wife, and Talbot felt that he had time to sow his crop of wild oats before he slipped on the gold ring which binds the giver as closely as the receiver.

Of the other girls, who were not ladies, and who were not eligible for the wedding ring, Talbot had a vast experience: but he passed them by, just stopping in his giddy flight for a noment to sip, as a butterfly stops to sip, the sweets from the flowers. And the world smiled and said, excusingly, behind his fan, "Youth will

But one night Talbot coming home from a supper party at which he had been the most joyous, the wildest of the party, saw a face whose owner was to influence not only his life, but the lives of those who were to come after him.

It was this wise. The night was fine and Talbot Woodleigh had chosen to walk from Eaton Square, the place of the supper, to his club, where he intended, late as it was, to finish "the evening." He sauntered along with his cigar in his lips, his opera hat open and showing the spotless creaseless shirt - a young Adonis waiting for a Venus.

(To be continued.)

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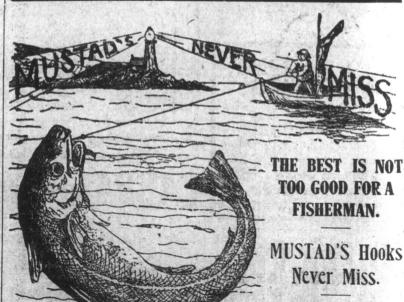
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