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What do you know?

his left temple. He looked dangerous.
But Pallacio went on, calmly. "I heard the widow say, my lord, that the picture was very like her husband, who had mysteriously disappeared. I could see it was very like the daughter."

ter. I thought perhaps you knew who the father was; perhaps you know who the daughter is."

Lord Sternholt flamed into a sudden rage. "You are an intermeddling fool" he began

Pallacio interrupted. "Why angry with me, my lord? If I have found a secret I can keep it. I came to help you if you will let me."

THREE times his lordship paced backwards and forwards through

the long hall before he could trust himself to answer. Then he stopped short in front of the old man, who had waited impassively, his anger

quite mastered.
"I think I can trust you, Pallacio."
"You know you can!"

"I accept the amendment," said his lordship, cynically. "I know I can trust you for many reasons we are both aware of, it would not suit you to betray me. You are a very good, kind friend, but I think you are a little too nervous on my account. Mr. Hugh Limner has never seen the picture since it left Connemara; he is never littly to see it again. So far as I re-

likely to see it again. So far as I remember you yourself have never seen it since that day. Come this way."

He led him to the centre of the great hall. There was a wide, vacant space on the dark oak panelling where the fullest light fell.

"Stand just there," Lord Sternholt said. He stooped and pushed some spring concealed in the rich carving of the wainscotting. A great square of dark oak about a man's height from

the floor began to revolve slowly. It swung completely round, and before

the astonished eyes of Pallacio there appeared the glorious Velasquez, framed in the same rich frame he had last seen in Mrs. Darley's cottage in

He could not restrain a cry of sur-

prise and admiration, which Lord Sternholt answered with a self-satis-

fied chuckle.

"I fancy that's pretty safe," he said, complacently. "See, I just press the centre of the rose in this panel and the picture vanishes. I press it again and it reappears. No one knows the contrivance except myself. The man that constructed it is dead."

"Have you never shown the picture to anyone?" asked Pallacio.

"Of course I have What would be

"Of course I have. What would be the good of having it if I didn't now and then make some rival collector green with envy? But they don't know where or how it is hidden."

"All the same, they are sure to talk, and Limner is almost sure sometime

or another to hear them talk. He is bound to recognize it and have a try to recover it for his wife's sake."

"Well, what do you propose to do about it?"

"To keep these two apart; to give Limner something else to think about."

"Have you some game of your own."

"Have you some game of your own in this, Pallacio?"

"What if I have—how does that concern you? If I can help you and please myself at the same time you have no right to complain."

"That's true enough. What is your

Pallacio leant forward and whis-

pered, as if the empty hall was full of eavesdroppers.

"Clever," said Lord Sternholt, with a short laugh, not pleasant to hear. "Yes, I think I can trust you with the picture."

"You know you can," retorted Pallacio. "You don't let me forget I am in your power."

same short, unpleasant laugh that had

Again Lord Sternholt laughed the

Connemara.

fied chuckle.

"Stand just there," Lord Sternholt

"I accept the amendment," said his

rage. "You ar fool," he began.

you guess? Speak out." Lord Sternholt's pretence of indif-ference had quite passed. The words came out through tight-elenched teeth. His face paled. A scar unnoticeable before showed in a thin red line over

Not a

Last week that foot had corns. But the owner read of Blue=jay.

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