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Lord Cecil's **Dilemma**

The Picnic

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Hastings quite expected that his mother would in some way betray that she knew something of the purpose for which Miss Craythorne had asked him for money. A secret with her was impossible, and while trying to convince himself that all curiosity on the subject was dead, he watched her

went on in much the same way, except that a little restraint had insensibly arisen between him and his fair guest He did not care to ask her assistance or advice in matters where the help of a sympathetic woman solved problems that were either beyond him or at best clumsily solved. Hitherto he had not hesitated to ask her to acastate when bent upon kindly ministrations to old servants. From her and warm blankets for the winter came easily and graciously. She had a sweet manner that won the hearts of the poor. But he could ask her no for her late on the evening of the avoided him.

Then there was a little annoyance over the mysterious disappearance of bered seeing the woman the night that she went away. She stood on the lawn and gazed at him strangely respondence. He caught the gleam of her black eyes, and wondered where looked again, she was gone, and he was too busy to think of the matter again until the housekeeper complained that a woman whom she had parlor maid was missing.

In her anxiety and fright she came and rave? into the breakfast-room without knocking, and Lady Hastings at once had annoyed them two nights earlier.

best, my lady," said the housekeener. "and I could not have kept her on me dismissed. Only think of that! I razy."

"Undoubtedly!" exclaimed her mas

For 'Several Months. Festered

and Itched, Cuticura Healed. "I was affected with pimples on my face and shoulders for several months. They festered and itched and my forchead was disfigured. I tried different remedies which did no good. I sent for a free sample of Cuticurs Soap and Ointment which seemed to help me. I bought more and after using two cakes of Guitaura Soap and one box of Cuticum Sint-

ter. "Where did the woman

ew servants in a hurry, and I go his one through a registry office. My lady was quite satisfied, and she seemed a superior sort of a girl. She had a dreadful temper, though, and one day showed me a wedding ring, which she said carried a title with it, and warned me that I should feel her displeasure before long."

"What nonsense!" laughed Lady Hastings. "I wish that you had reported this to me, Simmons, Such creatures are really dangerous, and am glad that she is gone, though

"She's to artful for that, my lady." declared Simmons. "And it's my pinion that there's more to be heard

"That will do." interrupted S Charles. "I will make all due in quiries about her to-day." His face had turned as white as

the cloth before him, for he knew that the woman was his wife. She had stared at him with her burning plack eyes from the wwn. They were the same eyes that he remembered in the registrar's office, when they WoodallForest sought his in one brief flash. They were the eyes that had glared at him from the face of the woman disguised as a fortune-teller! She had been in his house, threatening his servants, and after this sensational disapearance, she would reappear with some show of authority.

He saw Ada Craythorne's sym pathetic eyes fixed upon him, a blush upon her cheek, an expression that mystified and annoyed him.

He left the room with a mumbled excuse, and locked himself away wrestle with the throbbing of his heart. But why this weakness? Why times that it could not affect his life stay away. So he waited one, two days and she did not come. No one been forgotten had not a man inquired | you out." Maitland had gone, he swore that he did not believe it, and demanded an audience with Sir Charles.

"I will see him." decided Hastings. Show him into the library. I will

that his master looked sterner than

visitor cross the hall, and his blustering tones roused his anger to a white recently engaged in the capacity of heat. How dared he address the servants? How dared he stamp his feet

"He is waiting ,Sir Charles," anhim until you are ready----

Sir Charles walked into the library

and saw standing before him a big, He remembered him at once: it was the fellow he had seen in the office of Ebenezer Lupus, two or three months earlier. If anything, he looked more dissipated now than he did Sir Charles closed the door, and

without further preamble, demanded: "Have I the great honor of speaking to Sir Charles Hastings?" sneered the

"That is my name."

"I'm happy to make your acquaintance, trusting that it will lead to nutual business and-"

"You are here," interrupted Sir Charles, haughtily, "making inquiries concerning a person named Agnes Maitland, I believe?"

"I am," with a significant smirk.



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"I think that you had better go now,"

Packed

Tight-

Kept

"Ha! ha! Do you think I am to careful, young man, for in me you see

He raised his voice almost to a childish. Good-night!" shriek, and his face became purple.

"You lie! You lie!" roared Spiers. 'I am being defrauded—I mean I have ent her money, and she promised to pay me when she became mistress

Hastings knew that anger would be wasted upon this man, and he spoke with a degree of calmness that sur-

"You know all about it, but I'll be with you at the last, did she? Ha! ha! Lupus has had a hand in this, also! But I tell you to beware, and I give press him and make life a burden. you one chance-Sir Charles Hastings-I give you one chance!"

His expression was so fierce and demoniac that the baronet kept a close watch upon his actions. He believed that the man was mad.

"Now answer me truthfully, for swear that your life is in my handsanswer me truthfully, and I will forgive you. Where have you hidden Lucy the woman you married?"

"I have not hidden her; I refuse to have anything to do with her," replied Sir Charles.

Spiers glared at him for the space

was the quiet rejoinder. "I do not! "You have not found money to send fled so suddenly, and she might have wish to soil my hands by throwing her out of my way?"

more, and he was quite sure that she third day. When he heard that Agnes be disposed of like this," snarled the of a minute, rage and doubt alternatyour master. My name, sir, is Spiers length, "but I will not swear that you wife's guardians—the sole surviving curse you; but I will have proof, I guardian. I want to know what you will have proof. And look here Sir

Hastings. "And your threats are

He believed that Spiers was not ac "I reneat that I know nothing of countable for his words or actions the woman. I have never spoken to He had dissipated until his senses

"I will obtain proof," he muttered,

young man, who was politely holding

"If this man comes here again, John," he said, "refuse him admit-

Spiers did not hear these words.

mother about Spier's visit, and much of his old gloom had returned to de-

The arrangements in progress for the Christmas festivities were a bitter mockery, and he wondered how he could endure it all with a smiling face. He had been mad to think that life held anything but sadness for him.

(To be continued)

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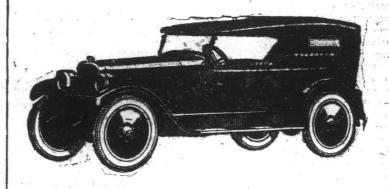
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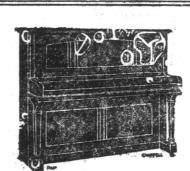
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