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WHOLESALE AGENTS

The Shadow of the Future.

CHAPTER XVII. SOME GRIEFS ARE MEDICIN-ABLE!"

"I thought it was just possible," she said, sadly, "that you might have sided with me. But I see now, I ought not to have expected it.'

"It seems," he answered, almost roughly, "we have all been expecting things we are not likely to get!"

"Ah, it does!" Her accent was so sorrowful, Mr. Villiers' fit of mortification, on his own, behalf, suddenly yielded to other impulse. He turned about. She was young-a most fair woman-the one his imagination had dwelt on for months as his very own. This project must be overthrown. He

"Pardon me now for speaking as had no right. But if you followed your most generous wish, Sydney, don't you know what you would do, besides grieving your mother terribly, and putting her—little as you intend it putting her unjustly to much pain? Why, you would be treating me cruelly. For you must have seen what I have been wanting to tell you for weeks. You are not going to cast away what I was going to offer, just that you may carry out the scheme of one day's surprise are you, Sydney, dear?"

Such a void was there in her lifein her heart-she bent to the tender note as young bud-laden branches sway before the whistle of the spring's

"Oh! must it be one or the other?" she cried. And Rupert Villiers caught

"See now," he ventured, "how would this do? Make me your almoner. Let fiasco. me take a thousand pounds, and give it among these people-a douceur they ought to be grateful to you forever for. Say 'yes' to this, and put an end to all

happy."

"Rupert. I should neither feel myself a wife worthy any man's love, nor a

ther's, if I did say 'yes,' " she answerpounds, or three, or one, to buy me a ed? "And you can be happy without name.

"Sydney, you are obstinate enough o drive a man mad!"

"I cannot alter." "Would you expect me to take yo some hovel of a home-"No. I expect nothing of the sort."

"And there vegetate on my salary?" "Rupert, I have made you angry Forgive me, and leave me." But the baffled suitor was overboil-

"Would you expect me to marry you cup of lukewarm coffee, brought unon my own beggarly pittance, and-"Mr. Villiers! Go!"

raised. He could have bitten his ton- argument go over the whole ground of gue out for the lapse the moment it contest, point out how absolutely she was uttered. But there was no quarter | would alienate herself from comforts in her attitude. He dared not disobey. at home, probably from all chances of He turned slowly on his heel, and prosperity in any quarter; how Quixo-

In the room below, Mrs. Alwyn, much eau-de-cologned and sal-volatiled, met him with: "Well, Rupert, well? What's to be

"Nothing," he answered, sullenly, "but to get our breakfasts. Then I may go and meet my father. Leonora, here's said, her pale face irradiating with something I've no use for now. If you care for gewgaws, take."

He tossed the sapphire ring across the table, and then the three sat down amends to?" to anything but a lively meal.

An hour later Mr. Villiers went of to Hedyngham to fetch the major, damping his cheery "Well, may I wish you many happy returns of the day, known every single case I couldn't at a method of hedging out of the my boy?" with a surly "No, you may not, sir"-and disclosing on the return money. That could only be dealt with drive the source of this miserable by principals."

Astonished, the old officer could only repeat, "Bless my heart! I never heard such a thing, never! To think poor, the struggling, trusting, defense-Then we—you and I, Sydney—would John Alwyn's obligations should turn less. "And now," she said, looking satisfied with the rest. up, and his child saddle herself with steadfastly at him through the heavy ute-guns only increased his son's ir- you think I do well or ill to pay them?" ritation, he held his peace while the last two miles were bringing him to his interview with Mrs. Alwyn.

That sorely tried lady received him

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"Now Major Villiers, you see what

dney is. Now you will find the difculty of dealing with her disposition. Against my will, as she must have mown, though, unhappily, I let poor Rupert overrule me, she went off on rago, which, instead of coming home to have properly explained, she prefers investigating through that most impertinently interfering Mr. Cheene. And this is the upshot. She takes her lestiny into her own hands, Major Vilders. Let her! She deliberately impoverishes herself. She is willfulwillful to the verge of wickedness. My

he work is none of mine!" Knowing the domestic drama from its first scenes, and disposed, spite of place in your home, why, I must go ing tirade in silence. It went sorely without it." She stopped herself sharp- against him to join forces for a moly, in a sob. What woman feels no ment against an absent minority, that sting in the discovery that it is her minority one solitary girl, spending purse, and not herself, which is covet- her worldly all to redeem her father's

> "Suppose I go and speak to Sydney myself," he volunteered, "and see if I can win her to look at things differ-

> "Oh, by all means go, major!" his hostess cried, "but as to moving her, h-f!" expressively, "as well expect to

stop the wind from blowing." And so, indeed, he found it, not altogether-lightly be it written, for he never dared confess as much from that ing now with disappointed rage, and day to this!—to his dissatisfaction. Sydney, sick and faint-for, saving a ordered, she had taken little enough now for a long wearying stretch-She gave her order still as a statue hailed his coming not only fearlessly, only her bosom, not her voice, up- but gladly. She let him in very sober tic her conduct would sound to the world: how unlooked for her money was by these statute-run creditors, and therefore, "how unnecessary-er-as they're not expecting anything, my dear, with a pity-as it were, to-to

> open old wounds "What! Even to heal them?" she something better far than loveliness "Did you know, Major Villiers, what sort of people they are I went to make

have given up a penny of the trust

Then Sydney told him simply who till, finding these ejaculatory min- tell me, quite truly, Major Villiers, if And the poor major, without so much as a cartridge left, could only brush, he said, the midges off his face with his big Indian silk handkerchief

> "Still, my dear child, have you realzed how this will leave you? Why, with fifty or sixty pounds, no more! And suppose your mother doesn't-doesn't smooth down. You'll be dependent on er, you know. She'll feel that unfair.

I'm afraid---" "I won't let her." Sydney cried. The ruth was bitter, though, and made her falter. "Mamma shall not be burdened with me. I ought to be worth my salt somewhere to some one. If God helps those who help themselves, Major Villiers, then I won't be afraid. I think he will help me."

There was no urging argument past this. The major went presently down getting rid of more midges by the way, to his son, of whom he had not ventured to speak to Sydney. But now joining the young man in a gloomy promenade up and down the fir walk, he said, with some of that enthusiasm stigmatized by Mrs. Alwyn as unbusiness-like.

"My boy, sooner than give up that girl I'd take her without a farthing, if I were in your shoes. She's a woman of a thousand!"

"But as she also happens to be a woman without a thousand, she is not the one for me, sir," returned Rupert, sulkily. He had pitied himself into a perfect slough of exasperation against the headstrong young marplot. "I don't forget: 'When poverty comes in at the

door, love flies out of the window." "Ah! but there need be nothing that young folks like you two ought to call overty at your door, my boy. Not if the hundreds I've put by can stave it off. If the love is only there, I'd marry er now, sooner than ever, I would, pon my honor, Rupert!"

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