THE RIGHTFUL HEIR

By M. T. CALDOR.

CHAPTER I.—(CONTINUED.)

He was handsome himself. Bernard watched her with feverish eyes.

"And what shall I do with it?" asked she, as she folded the narrow slip of paper.

"Ah, if I could help it—believe me, I would rather cut off my right hand than ask it of you, but it is for the sake of another—better, purer than I. I must implore you to carry it yourself to the foot of the great craig that overhangs the river, at the upper end of the chestnut woods, in the—the—you know, you dare you do it, Lady Violante? when I assure you do earthly harm can come of it to you; and much, very much anxiety may be spared me, and another will be very dear to me."

Lady Violante drew a long breath, but said firmly, "Certainly, I will do it, why do you doubt it? I have often strayed as far, with only a servant in attendance."

"Ah, yes, but there must be no servant near to see or suspect anything. You must promise no living thing shall see that, her a word to any one—your attention, or know aught that may be hereafter connected with the cliff in your mind."

The mystery was growing startling. Lady Violante's pride was aroused, and for the first time she hesitated.

"Ah!" said he, bitterly, while his glittering eye followed the changes of her face. "I knew it would be so—you promised to trust me, but you are already doubting me—and are ready to retreat."

"No, no!" exclaimed she, impetuously—"I will not retreat, I will do all you ask of me."

"And no one—not even your father—most of all, Count Germain, your lover, shall know what I have said to you?" asked he, eagerly.

"No one," repeated she firmly. "I take your assurance, that there is nothing in the transaction to compromise my character or station, and I pass over your allusion to a lover, where there is no such relation. Now tell me what else there is for me to know."

He had closed his eyes wearily, and his lips writhed with a spasm of pain.

The pity and self overpowered reserve —"You are ill, you are suffering, oh, that I could aid you, could bear half the suffering myself. Shall I call Julio?"

"No, no," said he, hurriedly, "let me be assured the note has reached its place, I shall be easier at once. You have but to fasten it to the bough of the lopped larch tree, the only one there, first being sure no one is near. Give a low whistle on this window three times, and then you may return as speedily as you please. My errand will be performed."

He disengaged an ivory whistle from a chain around his neck, and held it toward her.

She received it with a gentle assuring smile, adding:

"Have no fears. I will find means to obey your injunction to the letter."

"Heaven bless you!" said he, turning his face to the pillow to hide his agitation.

And Lady Violante glided softly from the room.

Early the next morning she came again, and taking advantage of the momentary absence of the attendant, she laid the whistle on the pillow, saying quietly:

"I have performed your first task; now show your gratitude by growing more cheerful, and settling me another."

He looked up anxiously.

"And no one saw you? you are sure of that?"

"Quite certain. Moreover, I took an early ride that way this morning, and the note was gone."

He drew a long breath of relief. A smile, so rarely beautiful it almost startled her, lit up his pallid face, and with a soft sigh, he whispered:

"Now I am ready to obey my nurse, and rest."

CHAPTER II.

SIX weeks had elapsed since Beauvais Chateau had sheltered the stranger, who had rescued its heiress from a terrible death. Still he was as much a stranger to the Count and all the household as at first, and was only known as M. Bernard. He was now able to cross his chamber, by the aid of crutches; and was rapidly regaining vigor and strength.

The strange melancholy that so darkened his fine countenance only vanished when Lady Violante came to while away, with her bright presence, the tedious hours of confinement. Then a new existence dawned upon him, another temperament to banish his old self, and he was gay and sparkling in his conversation as the most lighthearted of the cavaliers who sought her favor.

"I have come to scold you," said she merrily one afternoon as she entered his apartment, and was greeted with a brightening eye. "Why did you so suddenly vanish from the window, as we rode up the avenue! Count Germain is much interested in you and longs to see you. Why do you so obstinately refuse to receive any visitors? He might so much soften these weary hours. Promise me I may bring him here to-morrow."

Bernard was gnawing his lip fiercely.

"Never!" exclaimed he, in so deep a tone it startled her. "Have patience, Lady Violante, I am fast growing stronger, you will soon be rid of me. Till then you must remember the promise you gave that I should be indulged in this one imperative demand."

"Now you are unjust as well as unkind. You know nothing is further from my thoughts than the wish to be rid of you. It is only that I cannot bear to think of you immured here in the dreary loneliness of this chamber, that makes me press upon you other associations. Besides, I am vexed that others should so misunderstand you, the Count—"

"What of him?" demanded Bernard with a flashing eye.

"Nay, do not look so angry. He does not understand it—and jests a little about the misanthropical hermit who saved my life. He will not comprehend my explanations."

"I beg you will not make any explanations to Count Germain on my behalf!" began Bernard haughtily; but her beseeching glance arrested him.

"Ah," said she, reproachfully, "why will you not allow others to know you as good and noble as you appear to me? What is this mystery that surrounds you?"

The black cloud came sweeping over his face, the gloomy fire lent its gleam to his eye, and with a bitter laugh he replied, "I wonder that you do not also shrink from me. You who know more of the mystery than any other. Do not, let pity for me, blind you, Lady Violante."

"Alone!" sighed she in return. "I would there was less concealment—and yet I must own it is not pity, not even gratitude, that draws me toward you."

"What then?" demanded he eagerly.

"Sincere, earnest friendship," replied she in clear, steady tones—the sincere eyes never blenching from his impassioned gaze. "I love you, for so much that is good and noble beneath this cold mask you strive to wear. There is genuine affinity between our minds—and it grieves me that others cannot share in my appreciation of your worth."

He checked a bitter smile, to say mournfully:

"It is your own surpassing goodness not any worth in me, dear lady, for so nothing of me—not even my name—if I be noble or peasant, rich or poor, innocent or guilty—"

"Nay, hold there, nothing unjust at one idea, forever forbid I think of you as a peasant born or even of ignoble blood."

Again, a scornful, cynical smile was repressed as he turned his face from observation, and then he said, with a gracious gesture of gratitude—

"Lady Violante, I am a mysterious being, isolation and danger and mystery are my portion, but again I assure you it is my misfortune, not my desert, that I am severed and precious to me is the sympathy you have given—these days, filled with pain, though they have been, are the happiest of my sorrowful life. That I was the humble instrument of saving you from a more frightful death, will be a cause of thanksgiving and rejoicing to my dying day—and yet I am so proud that any attentions shown to me by you out of gratitude to that become hateful and repulsive. O, Lady Violante, I, so unloved and alien to all the rest of the world, cannot afford to lose the sweet drop in my bitter cup. Think not of what is due your preserver, but care for me for my sake."

The fair girl looked at him wistfully. The rapidly blushing and paling cheek betrayed the agitation he strove to conceal. The starting fear that only for a moment dimmed the eagle eye, moved her deeply.

"Strange mortal!" said she, holding out her hand with the tenderness of a woman, and yet the dignity of a queen. "How many times already have you contorted from me that aside from all I owe you I cannot help admiring and loving you."

He bent over her little hand, and with the one respectful kiss fell a burning, tear.

"God bless you!" come what will hereafter, I shall be able to say, the cup of joy has once been lifted to my lips, and the memory of this moment shall have power to banish, my gloom."

"Come," said Violante, taking up a book from the table, "you shall finish the poem we began yesterday. Never heard I reader before, who could so madenly charm the ear. All through my ride with the Count, I was longing to return and finish the book with you. Let us not waste the time—for when my father is free from the old Count's visit in the library, he will make his usual call here, and interrupt us."

M. Bernard took the book, but paused to say:

"The old Count Germain! I have heard of him; what sort of a character do you give him?"

"Indeed, I can hardly tell. He is certainly variable. At one time, genial, courteous, and, charming—and then again, so morose, reserved and suspicious—he quite frightens me from him. But his son—"

"Never mind his son!" interrupted her companion with a frown.

"Poor, young Count Germain! what purulent dislike you manifest for him!" said Violante, laughing—"while he is so extremely anxious to know you."

"A single meeting would suffice for us both," muttered Bernard.

"Do you know him?" asked the girl, with a new suspicion.

The abruptness of the question startled him, and he faltered:

"I did once—that is, I have heard—and then waiting to collect his thoughts, he added, bitterly—"be sure, if you are a friend to either of us, you will never bring about a meeting, or mention the name of one to the other."

Lady Violante was lost in deep and evidently painful meditation. He watched her face uneasily, and ventured meekly:

"I told you I was made up of mysteries—do not try to pierce them, and leave yourself never to be unfathomable and unsatisfactory. Let the Germains be banished from our conversation henceforward, and it will be pleasanter for us both. Now for our poem."

But another interruption come from a servant, who brought in a small basket of fruit, which he said an old woman had left at the door, saying it was for the sick stranger at the Chateau.

Lady Violante saw from her guest's face the basket was of no common significance, and dismissing the servant, she herself handed it to Bernard.

The moment the door closed upon the servant he hastily rolled out the fruit, and drew forth, as she had already anticipated, a small slip of paper, over which his eye darted hastily, while he muttered, evidently forgetful of his auditor:

"Selfish that I have been! in the intoxication of my own happiness, I have forgotten how much she must suffer from suspense and anxiety. It was rash and reckless for her to venture here in any disguise."

Lady Violante rose in embarrassment; she did not wish to hear what was intended only to be spoken in his own mind—but with a mournful smile he returned to the present, and tossing her the note, he said abruptly:

"You will see why I must appeal to you once more for your aid. I did not mean to compromise you again, in the slightest way, but you see what fraud alarm it is needful for me to calm."

The note was written in a delicate female hand, and ran thus:

"I can bear my agonized suspense no longer. Why do you not write to me again? I fancy you guessing at—what has happened, and what detains you at the Chateau; but a thought and fear assails me, I see our enemies go-ing thither every day! How will you receive them? Have you written to you to save the beautiful young lady—but oh, it was rash to risk so much in remaining at the Castle. I tremble for you left you fall into their hands. Bernard, dearest, come back to me as soon as possible!"

Lady Violante read it through, and then in a slightly constrained voice said:

"I am only more bewildered. Surely I can truthfully assure you no enemies to you come near the Chateau. The lady's fears are groundless."

He shook his head impatiently.

"Let us have no further discussion concerning them. I will, I must trust from you, so much faith have I in your generous sympathy with misfortune—that it is the Germains to whom she refers—nor deny that my careful avoidance of the young Count is to prevent the unpleasant results of his recognition. I know all I say plunges you yet deeper in baffled conjecture, but I would fain implore you to have faith in me for a while longer, and—"

She signed even while she smiled.

A QUEEN'S "SEA DOGS."

The Voyages of the Elizabethan Seamen Exploited to Every Part of the World.

During most of Queen Elizabeth's reign there was no open war with Spain. On the contrary, there was gonfalon friendship, but the privateering captains were not slow to survive. Even the queen and her council had no objection to their expeditions, provided they did not so openly violate the law of nations as to create great embarrassment to the government.

The voyages of the Elizabethan seamen extended to almost every part of the world. In the last days of Edward VI. Sir Hugh Willoughby had perished in the Arctic seas, and Richard Chancellor had made his way through the White sea to the country and the court of the czar of Muscovy. Elizabethans followed in their wake. Under Frobisher and Davis they explored Meta Incognita and Greenland and Hudson's straits. With good Sir Humphrey Gilbert they attempted the planting of Newfoundland. With Lane and White they went out to Raleigh's colony of Roanoke. They followed the Portuguese and the Dutch to the East Indies, and with James Lancaster's wonderful voyages began the English trade to Java and Sumatra and Malacca. They went with Hawkins in his Solomon or the Jesus of Lubeck to gather slaves upon the African coast, or lay off Flores and Corvo to inter-cept the annual silver fleets that brought to the King of Spain the wealth of Mexico and Peru, or with his ships in the harbor of Cadiz. But most famous of all were the adventures that marked their free-booting expeditions to the Spanish Main, lured on by fabulous tales of El Dorado or by knowledge of the more substantial wealth which the Spaniards had derived from their rich and abundant provinces in the new world.

SPIDERS' WEBS TO BLAME.

When Wet With Dew They Make the Telegraph Service Useless.

From an exchange: The overland telegraph between Yokohama and Tokio was recently interrupted in a strange and mysterious way. Every morning for several days it was impossible to get a message over the line during the early hours. Then an old word here and there managed to struggle along the bewitched wires, arriving at some point, for which, as it was afterward discovered, it was not intended. As the day wore on, however, the wires became clear and remained so till the following morning, when they were again interrupted. After a little more delay messages did get through, but this did not relieve the strained nerves of the officials, for the telegrams were of the most bewildering nature. A party of linemen, under the superintendence of a Japanese expert, were sent to thoroughly overhaul the wires on the trunk line. They examined the poles for a considerable distance without discovering any clue; but one morning, when about fifty miles from Tokio, the expert saw a nest of gigantic spiders which had spun their webs about the wires, and in some instances down to the ground.

On putting out his hand to brush away one of these webs he received a shock, and then the cause of all the trouble was clear to him. The morning dew made the spider's webs good conductors of electricity, and the current was carried to earth in the early morning, and the drying of the gossamer threads here and there accounted for the clearing of the wires later in the day.

Fair Collateral.

A soldier in the guards came to me in Queen's Square to swear to his having lost his duplicate. I looked at the affidavit to see if it were military accoutrements, etc., that he had pawned, when, to my surprise I found that he had pawned a £2 bank note for 10s 6d. On asking an explanation of this odd circumstance he said he received the £2 note and was resolved to pass a jolly evening but not to spend more than a half guinea, and to insure this he pawned the note for that sum, and destroyed the duplicate afterward, that he might not be able to raise money on it in case his resolution should give way while he was drinking with his companions.—Cornhill Magazine.

South Carolina is opening up a market for phosphate in Japan.

Deafness Cannot be Cured

by local applications as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube is inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed, Deafness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

We will give One Hundred Dollars for any case of Deafness (caused by catarrh) that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. Send for circulars, free.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

Sold by druggists, 75c.

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

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Cascarets Candy Cathartic, the most wonderful medical discovery of the age, pleasant and refreshing to the taste, act gently and positively on the kidneys, liver and bowels, cleansing the entire system, dispel colds, cure headache, fever, habitual constipation and biliousness. Please buy and try a box of C. C. C. today; 10, 25, 50 cents. Sold and guaranteed to cure by all druggists.

Try Grain-O.

Ask your grocer today to show you a package of GRAIN-O, the new food drink that takes the place of coffee. The children may drink it without injury as well as the adult. All who try it like it. GRAIN-O has that rich seal brown of Mocha or Java, but it is made from pure grains, and the most delicate stomach receives it without distress. ¼ the price of coffee. 15 cents and 25 cents per package. Sold by all grocers. Tastes like coffee. Looks like coffee.

The Finest Lawn Grass.

The agricultural department at Washington, after long experiments with lawn grasses, declares that crested dog's tail is the best lawn grass known.

"I am an old soldier of the Republic, 3 years ago I was discharged from the army for chronic rheumatism. Doctors failed to give me relief. Two bottles of Burdock Blood Bitters put me on my feet. It is worth its weight in gold." W. R. Knapp, Litchfield, Hillsdale Co., Mich.

Marie—"Just think of the nerve of the fellow to propose to me." Nettie—"Nerve? Why, it was absolute recklessness"

A Pleasant Duty.—When I know anything worthy of recommendation I consider it my duty to tell it," says Mrs. Jas. Hunsberg, of Hansburg, Pa. "Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder has cured many of my friends of catarrh. It is wonderfully magical in its effect. The first application is soothing, the second relieves. I would not be without it in the house."

The prince of Wales is said to be the owner of one of the worst slum districts in London.

No-To-Bac for Fifty Cents.

Guaranteed tobacco habit cure, makes weak men strong, blood pure, 50c. and $1. All druggists.

The flattening of the planet Jupiter can be seen through the telescope.

Star Tobacco is the leading brand of the world, because it is the best.

The popular belief that a drowning person rises to the surface three times is a mistake.

Smoke the Cigarette. 20 for 5 cts.

The Pope's daily meal is a large dejeuner.

Bicycle riders, football players and athletes, generally, find a sovereign remedy for the sprains and bruises and cuts to which they are constantly liable, in Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil.

The devil has a claim on the soul of the man who is selling for any kind of a sin to remain in his heart.

"An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure." Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup prevents consumption by curing colds, and all throat and lung troubles.

Sciatica—"I thought Softy had quit drinking." "He Drags—Oh, he did. He's now celebrating his reformation."

Rich and poor alike suffer the tortures that come with that terrible plague, Itching Piles. Rich and poor alike find instant relief and permanent cure in Doan's Ointment. Your dealer keeps it.

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