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such a thing as that?" she cried, aghast. He colored, and drew her closer to

into the face of her second son.

"I-I didn't mean it," he faltered. "You have always taken sides against him," began his mother. 'Please, mother," he cried miser-The Hollow "You say this to me now," she went

mamma darling. You know he loved Challis as deeply as any of us loved sion GEORGE BARR MCCUTCHEON

of Her Hand

Author of "Graustark" "Truston King," etc.

Illustrations by Ellsworth Young

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Yes, there wasn't a nose there that

couldn't be counted with perfect se-

out the list. She did not consult her

true that Sara forestalled her in a way

she would be pleased if Mrs. Wrandall

by the lamentable death of her idol.

He Did Not Mean to Be Unfeeling.

He was her idol. He was her first-

born, he was her love-born. He came

to her in the days when she loved her

husband without much thought of re-

and master. The head of the house of

up to, to be respected and admired by

her, for he was a very great man, but

he was dear to her only because he

was the father of Challis, the first-

In the order of her nature, Challis

Strangely enough, the three of them

therefore was her most dearly beloved,

Vivian the least desired and last in

her affections as well as in sequence.

perfected a curiously significant rec-

ord of conjugal endowments. Challis

had always been the wild, wayward,

unrestrained one, and by far the most

lovable; Leslie, almost as good look-

ing but with scarcely a noticeable

trace of charm that made his brother

attractive; Vivian, handsome, selfish

and as cheerless as the wind that

blows across the icebergs in the north.

Challie had been born with a widely

enveloping heart and an elastic con-

science; Leslie with a brain and a

soul and not much of a heart, as things

go; Vivian with a soul alone, which be-

become divided against itself without

Mrs. Redmond Wrandall was the

And now they had brought her dear-

ly beloved son home to her, murdered

and-disgraced. If it had been either

of the others, she could have said:

"God's will be done." Instead, she

cried out that God had turned against

Leslie had had the bad taste or

time when the family was sitting

numb and hushed under the blight of

the first horrid blow. He did not mean

to be unfeeling. It was the truth burst-

I knew it," he had said. His arm was

about the quivering shoulders of his

She looked up, a sob breaking in

"How can you-how dare you say

her throat. For a long time she looked

'I knew Chal would come to this-

ing from his unhappy lips.

mother as he said it.

charity or self-sacrifice.

man, and old for his years.

much of an effort.

vine and fig tree.

ily cared to make.

renity. It was a notable occasion.

Afterwards the girl said to Leslie when they were quite alone: will never forgive you for that, Les. It was a beastly thing to say."

place in my affection-why, Leslie, I

Vivian interposed. "Les is upset,

He bit his lip, which trembled. 'She's never cared for me as she cared for Chal. I'm sorry if I've made it

"See here, Leslie, was Chal so-80-

"Yes. I meant what I said a while It was sure to happen to him one time or another. Sara's had a lot to put up with."

"Sara! If she had been the right sort of a wife, this never would have Mrs. Wrandall, the elder, had made happened."

"After all is said and done, Vivie, daughter-in-law in the matter. It is Sara's in a position to rub it in on us if she's of a mind to do so. She won't by sending word, through Leslie, that do it, of course, but-I wonder if she isn't gloating, just the same." "Haven't we treated her as one of

would issue invitations to as many of Challis' friends as she deemed advisus?" demanded she, dabbing her handable. As for herself, she had no wish kerchief in her eyes. "Since the wedin the matter; she would be satisfied ding, I mean. Haven't we been kind with whatever arrangements the fam- to her?"

"Oh, I think she understands us It is not to be supposed, from the perfectly," said her brother. foregoing, that Mrs. Wrandall, the

"I wonder what she will do now?" elder, was not stricken to the heart mused Vivian, in that speech casting her sister-in-law out of her narrow little world as one would throw aside a burnt-out match.

> "She will profit by experience," said he, with some pleasure in a superior wisdom.

In Mrs. Wrandall's sitting room at the top of the broad stairway sat the family-that is to say, the immediate family-a solemn-faced footman in front of the door that stood fully ajar so that the occupants might hear the words of the minister as they ascended, sonorous and precise, from the hall below. A minister was he who knew the buttered side of his bread. His discourse was to be a beautiful one. He stood at the front of the stairs and faced the assembled listeners in the hall, the drawing room and the entresol, but his infinitely touching words went up one flight and lodged.

Sara Wrandall sat a little to the left of and behind Mrs. Redmond Wrandall, about whom were grouped the three remaining Wrandalls, father, son and daughter, closely drawn together. Well to the fore were Wrandall uncles and cousins and aunts, and one or two carefully chosen blood relations to the mistress of the house, whose hand had long been set against kinsmen of less exalted promise

specting him. She was beginning to Beside Sara Wrandall, on the small, regard him as something more than a pink divan, sat a stranger in this somlover when Leslie came, so it was difcompany: a young woman in ferent. When their daughter Vivian black, whose pale face was uncovered, was born, she was plainly annoyed but and whose lashes were lifted so rarely wholly respectful. Mr. Wrandall was that one could not know of the deep, no longer the lover; he was her lord real pain that lay behind them, in her Irish blue eyes. Wrandall was a person to be looked

She had arrived at the house an hour or two before the time set for the ceremony, in company with the widow. True to her resolution, the widow of Challis Wrandall had remained away from the home of his people until the last hour. She had been consulted, to be sure, in regard to the final arrangements, but the meetings had taken place in her own apartment, many blocks distant from the house in lower Fifth avenue. The afternoon before she had received Redmond Wrandall and Leslie, his son. She had not sent for them. They came perfunctorily and not through any sense of obligation. These two at least knew that sympathy was not what she wanted, but peace. Twice during the two trying days, Leslie had come to see her. Vivian telephoned.

On the occasion of his first visit, Leslie had met the guest in the house. The second time he called, he made it a point to ask Sara all about her.

It was he who gently closed the longed to God, after all, and not to door after the two women when, on her. Of course she had a heart, but it the morning of the funeral, they enwas only for the purpose of pumping tered the dark, flower-laden room in blood to remote extremities, and had which stood the casket containing the nothing whatever to do with anything body of his brother. He left them so unutterably extraneous as love, alone together in that room for half an hour or more, and it was he who As for Mr. Redmond Wrandall he went forward to meet them when they was a very proper and dignified gentlecame forth. Sara feaned on his arm as she ascended the stairs to the room It may be seen, or rather surmised, where the others were waiting. The that if the house of Wrandall had not ashen-faced girl followed, her eyes been so admirably centered under its lowered, her gloved hands clenched. own vine and fig tree, it might have

Mrs. Wrandall, the elder, kissed Sara and drew her down beside her on the couch. To her own surprise, as well as that of the others, Sara broke down and wept bitterly. After all, she was sorry for Challis' mother. It was the human instinct, she could not hold out against it. And the older woman put away the ancient grudge she held against this mortal enemy and dissolved into tears of real com-

A little later she whispered brokenperhaps it was misfortune-to blurt ly in Sara's ear: "My dear, my dear, out an agonized "I told you so" at a this has brought us together. I hope you will learn to love me."

Sara caught her breath, but uttered no word. She looked into her motherin-law's eyes, and smiled through her tears. The Wrandalls, looking on in amaze, saw the smile reflected in the face of the older woman. Then it was that Vivian crossed quickly and put her arms about the shoulders of her sister-in-law. The white flag on both

Hetty Castleton stood alone and wavering, just inside the door. No stranger situation could be imagined than the one in which this unfortunate girl found herself at the present mo-

ment. She was virtually in the hands of those who would destroy her; she was in the house of those who most deeply were affected by her act or that fatal night. Among them all she stood, facing them, Untening to the moans and sobs, and yet her limbs did not give way beneath her. "You who are left to take his

Some one gently touched her arm. It was Leslie. She shrank back, a fearful look in her eyes. In the semidarkness he failed to note the expres-

Won't you sit here?" he asked, in dicating the little pink divan against the wall. "Forgive me for letting you

She looked about her, the wild light still in her eyes. She was like a rat

in a trap. Her lips parted, but the word of thanks did not come forth. A strange, inarticulate sound, almost a gasp, came instead. Pallid as a ghost, she dropped limply to the divan, and dug her fingers into the satiny seat. As if fascinated, she stared over the black heads of the three women imme diately in front of her at the full length portrait hanging where the light from the hall fell upon it: the portrait of a dashing youth in riding

A moment later Sara Wrandall came over and sat beside her. The girl shivered as with a mighty chill when the warm hand of her friend fell upon hers and enveloped it in a firm clasp. "His mother kissed me," whispered

Sara. "Did you see?" The girl could not reply. She could only stare at the open door. A small, hatchet-faced man had come up from below and was nodding his head to Leslie Wrandall-a man with short side whiskers, and a sepulchral look in his eyes. Then, having received a sign from Leslie, he tiptoed away. Almost instantly the voices of people singing softly came from some distant remote part of the house.

And then, a little later, the perfeetly modulated voice of a man in prayer.

Back of her, Wrandalls; beside her, Wrandalls; beneath her, friends of the Wrandalls; outside, the rabble, those who would join with these black, raven-like specters in tearing her to pieces if they but knew!

The droning voice came up from below, each well-chosen word distinct and clear: tribute beautiful to the irreproachable character of the deceased Leslie watched the face of the girl, curiously fascinated by the set, emotionless features, and yet without a conscious interest in her. He was dully sensible to the fact that she was beautiful, uncommonly beautiful. It did not occur to him to feel that she was out of place among them, that she belonged down stairs. Somehow she was a part of the surroundings, like the specter at the feast.

If he could have witnessed all that transpired while Sara was in the room below with her guest-her companion, as he had come to regard her without having in fact been told as much-he would have been lost in a maze of the most overwhelming emotions

To go back: The door had barely closed behind the two women when Hetty's trembling knees gave way beneath her. With a low moan of horror, she slipped to the floor, covering her face with her hands. Sara knelt beside her

"Come," she said gently, but firmly; "I must exact this much of you. we are to go on together, as we have planned, you must stand beside me at Together we must look upon him for the last time. You must see him as I saw him up there in the country. I had my cruel blow that night. It is your turn now. I will not blame you for what you did. But if you expect me to go on believing that you did a brave thing that night, you must convince me that you are not a coward now. It is the only test I shall put you to. Come; I know it is hard. I know it is terrible, but it is the true test of your ability to go through with it to the end. I shall know then that you have the courage to face anything that may come up.

She waited a long time, her hand on the girl's shoulder. At last Hetty

"You are right," she said hoarsely. I should not be afraid." Later on they sat over against the

wall beyond the casket, into which they had peered with widely varying emotions. Sara had said

"You know that I loved him." The girl put her hands to her eyes and bowed her head.

"Oh, how can you be so merciful to me?"

"Because he was not," said Sara, white-lipped. Hetty glanced at the



Hetty's Trembling Knees Gave Way Beneath Her.

half-averted face with queer, indescribable expression in her eyes. If Leslie Wrandall could have looked Continued on Page 3

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