The Fighting Chance. ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

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JULISTUSCED VION LAST WEEK!

Howard Quarrier

for a while. Rena Bonnesdel possessed

herself of the drawing and held it up,

amid a shout of laughter, and, to his

for a Vandyke beard making the cari-

"Who on earth did that?" whispered

"Did he ever chase his own dog?"

"Yes-so Blinky says-in the Caro-

his notion of humor. Did you ever

bear such a laugh? No wonder Mr.

The gay uproar had partly subsided,

"Oh, no." cackled his lordship; "I

Sylvia Landis apprehensively.

but of course he'll take it well."

asked Siward, biting his lip.

-no, nor Sylvia Landis.

who already dislikes me.

"But he didn't do it."

voice beside him.

"Nice?"

grateful!"

said, laughing.

time of it."

"Miserable time?"

"You mean I-I"-

will enter your head to say."

see how nice you can be."

that?" he asked curlously.

word for what I have told you."

dreadful way."

"But it resembles him in a very

been perfectly possessed to plague him.

She seems unable to take him serious-

think he'd tolerate her if she were not

"I'm awfully sorry," was all Siward

"Don't look that way," came a low

"Do I show everything as plainly as

"Oh," she cried resentfully, "don't be

"I-really am not, you know," he

"That," she rejoined slowly, "is the

truth. You say conventional things in

a manner-in an agreeably personal

manner-that interests women. But

you are not grateful to anybody for

anything. You are indifferent, and

"Waiting for you to say what never

"Flirt? No. I mean that you don't

fiirt, that you are always dreamlly

occupied with your own affairs, from

which listlessly congenial occupation,

when drawn, you are so unexpectedly

nice that a girl immediately desires to

"I seem to read you-sometimes."

"It's very nice of you," he said.

"To look at me-now and then."

said, and for awhile he gloomily busied

cature dreadfully apparent.

smiled.

Ferrall over his shoulder. There! O Lord, but you have hit it! Put a ticked saddle on the cur-there!" Who is this supposed to be?" began Siward, looking up. But "Wait!" chuckled his host, seizing the still wet sketch and making for the door.

Siward strolled into the bathroom, washed a spot or two of lnk from his ngers, returned and buttoned his valstcoat, then, completing an unhurried tollet, went out and down the stairway to the big living room. There were a number of people there-Mrs. Leroy Mortimer, very fetching with her Japanese-like coloring, black hair and eyes that slanted just enough; Renn Bonnesdel, smooth, violet eyed, blond and rather stunning in a peculiarly innocent way; Miss Caithness. very pale and slimly attractive, and the Page boys, Willis and Gordon, delightfully shy and interested and having a splendld time with any woman who could afford the intellectual lei-

Stward spoke pleasantly to them all. Other people drifted down-Marion Page, who looked like a schoolmarm and rode like a demon; Elleen Shannon, pink and white as a thorn blossom, with the deuce to pay lurking in her gray eyes; Kathryn Tassel and Mrs. Vendenning, whom he did not know, and finally his hostess, Grace Ferrall, with her piquant, almost boyish, freckled face and sweet, frank eyes and the figure of an adolescent.

She gave Siward one pretty sun browned hand and laid the other above his, holding it a moment in her light

"Stephen, Stephen," she said under her breath, "it's because I've a few things to scold you about that I've asked you to Shotover."

"I suppose I know," he said. "I should hope you do. I've a letter tonight from your mother."

"From my mother?" "I want you to go over it-with meif we can find a minute after dinner." Quarrier is annoyed." She released his hand, turning partly "Kemp, dinner's been announced, so cut that dog story in two. the circle, returned, like a bad penny. Will you give me your arm, Major to Quarrier. He smiled again symmet-Belwether? Howard," to her cousin Mr. Quarrier, who turned from Miss rically as he received it, nodding his compliments to Alderdene. Landis to listen, "will you please try to recollect whom you are to take inand do it?" And as she passed Siward didn't draw it, old chap!" in a low voice, mischievous and slangy, "Sylvia Landis for yours, as she says Captain Voucher. she didn't have enough of you on the chorus along the table.

pair according to some previous no- looking across at Quarrier. And sudtice. Siward turned to Sylvia Landis denly Quarrier's large handsome eyes gunroom," observed Ferrall-"unless"with the pleasure of his good fortune met Siward's for the briefest fraction looking questioningly at Siward. so plainly visible in his face that her of a second, then were averted. But own brightened in response.

"You see," she said gayly, "you can- less pallor that did not escape Siward not escape me. There is no use in looking wildly at Agatha Caithness"he wasn't-"or pretending ; ou're pleas-ed," slipping her rounded bare arm through the arm he offered. "You "Yes can't guess what I've done tonight. Nobody can guess except Grace Fer. I'd be to take any liberty with a man rall and one other person. And if you try to look happy beside me I may tell you-somewhere between sherry and cognac-oh, yes, I've done two things-I have your dog for you!"

"Not Sagamore?" he said incredulous-

ly as he was seating her. "Certainly-Sagamore, I said to Mr. Quarrier, I want Sagamore, and when he is very sensitive. Oh, I wish that he tried to give him to me I made him fool Englishman had been in Ballytake my check. Now you may draw hoo! another for me at your leisure, Mr. Siward. Tell me, are you pleased?" for she was looking for the troubled hesitation in his face, and she saw it dawning.

"Mr. Quarrier doesn't like me, you

know "But I do," she said coolly. "I told him how much pleasure it would give his cousin." me. That is sufficient, is it not, for

everybody concerned?" "He knew that you meant to"-"No; that concerns only you and me. Are you trying to spoil my pleasure in

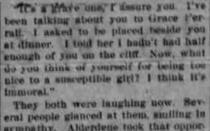
what I have done?" "I can't take the dog, Miss Landis."

"Oh," she said, vexed, "I had no idea you were vindictive."

There was a silence. He bent forward a trifle, gravely scrutinizing a "hand painted" name card, though it might not have astonished him to learn that somebody's foot had held the brush. Somewhere in the vicinity Grace Ferrall had discovered a woman who supported dozens of relatives by painting that sort of thing for the summer residents at Vermilion Point, down the coast. So, being charitable. she left an order and, being thrifty, insisted on using the cards spite of her husband's gibes.

People were now inspecting them with more or less curiosity. Siward found his "hand painting" so unattractive that he had just tipped it over to avoid seeing it, when a burst of laughter from Lord Alderdene made everybody turn. Mrs. Vendenning was laughing; so was Rena Bonnesdel, looking over Quarrier's shoulder at a card he was holding-not one of the "hand" decorated, but a sheet of note paper containing a drawing of a man rushing after a gun shy dog.

The extraordinary cackling laughter I his lordship obliterated other sounds



eral people gianced at them, smiling is sympathy. Alderdene took that opportunity to revert to the sketch, furnishing a specimen of his own inimitable laughter as a running accompaniment to the story of Quarrier and his dog in North Carolina until he had everybody, as usual, laughing, not at the story, but at him, all of which demonstration was bitterly offensive to Quarrier. He turned his eyes once on Miss Landis and on Siward, then dropped

The hostess arose. A rustle and flurry of silk and lace and the scraping of chairs, a lingering word or laugh. and the color vanished from the room, leaving a circle of men in black stand-

ing around the table. Here and there a man, lighting a cigarette, bolted his coffee and cognac and strolled out to the gunroom. Ferrall, gesticulating vigorously, resumed his preprandial dog story to Captain Voucher. Belwether buttonholed Alderdene and bored him with an interminably facetious tale until that nobleman, threatened with maxillary dislocation, fairly wrenched himself oose and came over to Siward, squint-

ing furiously.
"Old ass!" he muttered. "His chop whiskers look like the chops of a Southdown ram, and he's got the wits of one. Look here, Stephen, I hear you fell into no end of-a scrape in

"Tu quoque, Blinky? Oh, read the newspapers and let it go at that!" "Just as you like, old chap!" re turned his lordship unabashed. "All I

meant was-anything Voucher and l can do-of course"-"You're very good. I'm not dead,

excessive annoyance, Siward saw that you know. unconsciously he had caricatured "'Not dead, you know!" repeated Major Belwether, coming up behind Quarrier. Ferrall's malicious request them with his sprightly step. "That reminds me of a good one"- He sat Quarrier had at first flushed up; then down and lighted a cigar; then, vainly he forced a smile, but his symmetrical attempting to control his countenance as though roguishly anticipating the features were never cordial when he treat awaiting them, he began another endless story.

The Page boys, very callow, very Quarrier dislikes that sort of thing. much delighted and a little in awe of such a celebrated personage, laughed heartily. And altogether there was sufficient attention and sufficient laughter to make a very respectable noise. This being the major's cue for an exit, he linas last season. It's Blinky; that's rose, one sleek hand raised in sprightly protest as though to shield the invisible ladies, to whose bournes he was bound, from an uproar too masculine and mighty for the ears of such renewed here and there as the sketch was passed along and, finally making

"Ass!" muttered Alderdene, getting up and pattering about the room in his big shiny pumps. "Give me a peg-somebody!"

Mortimer swallowed his brandy, lingered, lifted the decenter, mechanical-"Nor I. I only wish I could," added by considering its remaining contents and his own capacity, then: "Nor I, nor I. Who did It?" ran the

"Bridge, captain?" "Certainly," said Captain Voucher "I didn't do it," said Sylvia gravely, briskly.

"I'll go and shoo the major into the "I've a date with your wife," ob-

served that young man, strolling tointo his face there crept an expressionward the hall. The Page boys, Rena Bonnesdel and

Elleen Shannon were seated at a card Presently under cover of a rapid fire table together, very much engaged of chatter she said, "Did you draw with one another, the sealed pack ly-"Yes; I had no idea it was meant ing neglected on the green cloth, a vast pink box of bonbons beside it not for him. You may imagine how likely neglected.

O'Hara and Quarrier, with Marion Page and Mrs. Mortimer, were immersed in the game, already stony faced and oblivious to outer sounds.

"I know it. You must take my About the rooms were distributed She looked up at him. "I do." Then; girls en tete-tete, girls eating bonbons "It's a pity. Mr. Quarrier does not and watching the cards, among them consider such things humorous. He-Sylvia Landis, hands loosely clasped behind her, standing at Quarrier's elbow to observe and profit by an expert performance.

As Siward strolled in she raised her "No, but he put you up to it, or Grace dainty head for an instant, smiled in Ferrall did, I wish Grace would let silence and resumed a study of her Mr. Quarrier alone. She has always flance's game.

A moment later, when Quarrier had emerged brilliantly from the melee, ly, and he simply hates it. I don't she looked up again triumphantly, supposing Siward was lingering somewhere waiting to join her. And she was just a trifle surprised and disappointed to find him nowhere in sight. She had wished him to observe the himself with whatever was brought to brilliancy of Mr. Quarrier's game.

But Siward, outside on the veranda, was saying at that moment to his hostess, "I shall be very glad to read my mother's letter at any time you

"It must be later, Stephen. I'm to cut in when Kemp sends for me. He ion. Perhaps he will fall into line." has a lot of letters to attend to. Tell said Mrs. Ferrall thoughtfully. "The me, what do you think of Sylvia Lan-

"I like her, of course," he replied pleasantly

Grace Ferrall stood thinking a mo-ment. "That sketch you made proved a great success, didn't it?" And she laughed under her breath.

"Did it? I thought Mr. Quarrier seemed annoyed"-"Really? What a muff that cousin

you can't help being nice to people, so some day some girl will think you are of mine is. He's such a muff, you grateful and will have a miserable know, that the very sight of his pointed beard and pompadour hair and his complacency sets me in fidgets to stir him up." "I don't think you'd best use me for

the stick next time," said Siward. "He's not my cousin, you know." shoulders: "By the way," she said cu-

clously, "who was that girl?" "What girl?" he asked coolly, looking at his hostess, now the very incar and work horses. Enquire of L. E. nation of delicate mockery with her Stapleton, two miles south-west of pretty laughing mouth, her boyish sun- Independence, "What a charming indictment you are and freekles

"You won't tell me, I suppose?"

"I'm sorry"—
"Was she pretty, Stephen?"
"Yes," she said sulkily, "I wish you

meense! Do you think I'm going to let you off without some sort of confession? If I had time now-but I haven't. Kemp has business letters He'll be furious, so I've got to take his cards or we won't have any pennies to buy gasoffne.

She retreated backward, with a gay nod of malice, and turned to enter the house and met Sylvia Landis face to

face in the hallway. "You minx!" she whispered. "Aren't

you ashamed?" "Very much, dear. What for?" And. catching sight of Siward outside in the starlight, divined perhaps something of her hostess' meaning, for she laughed uneasily, like a child who winces under a stern eye.

"You don't suppose for a moment." she began, "that I have"-

"Yes, I do. You always do." "Not with that sort of man," she returned naively. "He won't." Mrs. Ferrall regarded her suspicious

ly. "You always pick out exactly the wrong man to play with"-They had moved back side by side into the hall, the bostess' arm linked

in the arm of the younger girl. "The wrong man" repeated Sylvia, instinctively freeing her arm, her straight brows beginning to bend in-

"I didn't mean that-exactly. You know how much I care for his mother and for him." The obstinate downward trend of the brows, the narrowing blue gaze, signaled mutiny to the woman who knew her so well.

"What is so wrong with Mr. Siward?" she asked.

"Nothing. There was an affair"-"This spring in town. I know it. Is

"Yes, for the present," replied Grace Ferrall uncomfortably. Then: "For goodness' sake, Sylvia, don't cross examine me that way! I care a great deal for that boy"-

"So do L I've made him take my

There was an abrupt pause, and presently Mrs. Ferrall began to laugh. "I mean it, really," said Sylvia quietly. "I like him immensely."

"Dearest, you mean it generously. with your usual exaggeration. You have heard that he has been foolish, and because he's so young, so likable, every instinct, every impulse in you is aroused to-to be nice to him"-

"And if that were true"-"There is no barm, dear"- Mrs. Ferrall hesitated, her eyes softening to a graver revery. Then looking up, "It's rather pathetic," she said in a low voice. "Kemp thinks he's foredoomed, like all the Siwards. It's an hereditary failing with him-no, it's hereditary damnation. Siward after Siward, generation after generation, you know"- She bit her lip, thinking a moment. "His grandfather was a friend of my grandparents, brilliant, bandsome, generous and-doomed! His own father was found dying in a dreadful resort in London, where he had wandered when stupefied-a Siward! Think of it! So you see what



Mrs. Kemp Ferrall. that outbreak of Stephen's means to those whose families have been New Yorkers since New York was. It is ominous, it is more than ominous. It means that the master vice has seized on one more Siward. But I shall never, never admit it to his mother."

The younger girl sat, wide eyed, silent. The elder's gaze was upon her, but her thoughts, remote, centered on the hapless mother of such a son. "Such indulgence was once fashion-

able. Moderation is the present fashsaid Mrs. Ferrall thoughtfully. "The main thing is to keep him among people, not to drop him. The gregarious may be shamed, but if anything, any incident happens to drive him outside by himself, if he should become solltary, there's not a diamer in for him. It's a pity. I know he meant to make himself the exception to the rule-and look! Already one carouse of his has landed him in the daily pa-

Sylvin flushed and looked up, "Grace, may I ask you a question?"

(To be continued)

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