

For The Term of His Natural Life

By MARCUS CLARKE

CHAPTER I.

On a certain May the garden of a large red-brick bow-windowed mansion called North-end House was the scene of a domestic tragedy. Three persons were the actors in it. One was an old man, whose white hair and wrinkled face gave token that he was at least sixty years of age. He stood erect, in the attitude of one surprised into sudden passion, and held up the heavy ebony cane upon which he was ordinarily accustomed to lean. He was confronted by a man of two-and-twenty, unusually tall and athletic of figure, dressed in rough seafaring clothes, and who held in his arms, protecting her, a lady of middle age. The face of the young man wore an expression of astonishment, and the slight frame of the gray-haired woman was convulsed with sobs.

These three people were Sir Richard Devine, his wife, and his only son Richard, who had returned from abroad that morning.

"So, madam," said Sir Richard, in the high-strung accent which in crises of great mental agony are common to the most self-restrained of us, "you have been for twenty years a living lie! For twenty years you have cheated and mocked me. For twenty years you have laughed at me for a credulous fool; and now, because I dared to raise my hand to that reckless boy, you admit it, and glory in the confession!"

"Mother, dear mother!" cried the young man, in a paroxysm of grief, "say that you did not mean those words; you said them but in anger! See, I am calm now, and he may strike me if he will."

Lady Devine shuddered, creeping close, as though to hide herself in the broad bosom of her son.

The old man continued: "I married you, Ellinor Wade, for your beauty; you married me for my fortune. I was a plebeian, a ship's carpenter! you were well born, your father was a man of fashion, the friend of prodigals. I was rich. I had been knighted. I was in favor at court. He wanted money and he sold you. I paid the price he asked, but there was nothing of your cousin, my Lord Bellasis in the bond."

"Spare me, sir, spare me!" said Lady Ellinor, faintly.

"Spare you? Ay, you have spared me, have you not? Lookye," he cried in sudden fury, "I am not to be fooled so easily. Your family are proud. Col. Wade has other daughters. My Lord Bellasis, even now thinks to retrieve his broken fortunes by marriage. Tomorrow your father, your sisters, all the world, shall know the story you have told me."

"You will not do this!" burst out the young man.

"Silence!" cried Sir Richard. Lady Devine slipped through her son's arms, and fell on her knees at her husband's feet.

"Do not do this, Richard. I have been faithful to you for two and twenty years. I have borne all the slights and insults you have heaped upon me. The secret of my early love, the confession that I never loved you, broke from me when, in your rage, you threatened him."

Sir Richard, who had turned to walk away, stopped suddenly, and his great white eyebrows came together in his red face with a savage scowl. He laughed, and in that laugh his fury seemed to congeal into a cold and cruel hate.

"You shall have your wish—upon one condition."

"What is it, sir?" she asked, rising, but trembling with terror, as she stood with drooping arms and widely opened eyes.

The old man looked at her for an instant, and then said, slowly:

"That this disobedient son, who has wrongfully squandered my money and eaten my bread, shall pack! That he keep himself from my sight, and never set foot again in house of mine."

Richard Devine gently loosed the arms that again clung around his neck, kissed the pale face, and turned him—scarcely less pale—toward the old man.

"I owe you no duty," he said. "You have always hated and reviled me. When by your violence you drove me from your house, you set spies to watch me in the life I had chosen. I have nothing in common with you. I have long felt it. I accept the terms you offer. I will go."

Sir Richard Devine laughed again. "I am glad to see you are so well disposed. Listen now. To-night I send for Quaid to alter my will. My sister's son, Maurice Frere, shall be my heir in your stead. I give you nothing. You leave this house in an hour. You change your name; you never by word or deed make claim on me or mine. I return in an hour, madam; let me find him gone."

He passed them, upright, as if upborne by passion, strode down the garden with the vigor that anger lends, and took the road to London.

"Richard," cried the poor mother. "Forgive me, my son! I have ruined you."

Richard Devine tossed his black hair from his brow in sudden passion of love and grief.

"Mother, dear mother, do not weep," he said. "I am not worthy of your tears. Forgive! It is I—impetuous and ungrateful during all your years of sorrow—who most need forgiveness. Let me share your burden that I may lighten it. He is just. It is fitting that I go. I can earn a name—a name that I need not blush to bear nor you to hear. I am strong. I can work. The world is wide. Farewell, my own mother!"

"Not yet, not yet! Ah! see, he has taken the Belzize road. Oh, Richard! pray heaven they may not meet."

"Tush! They will not meet. You are pale, you faint!"

"A terror of I know not what coming evil overpowers me. I tremble for the future. Oh, Richard, Richard! forgive me! pray for me!"

"Hush, dearest! Come, let me lead you in. I will write. I will send you news of me once, at least, ere I depart. So, you are calmer, mother!"

Sir Richard Devine, knight, ship-builder, naval contractor and millionaire, was the son of a Harwich boat carpenter. Early left an orphan with a sister to support, he soon reduced his sole aim in life to the accumulation of money. A shrewd man of business, a thorough master of his trade, troubled with no scruples of honor or of delicacy, he made money rapidly, and saved it when made. He married his sister to a wealthy Bristol merchant, one Anthony Frere, and married himself to Ellinor Wade, the eldest daughter of Col. Wotton Wade, an uncle by marriage of a remarkable scamp and dandy, Lord Bellasis. At that time, what with lucky speculations in the funds, and the legitimate profit on his government contracts, he had accumulated a princely fortune, and could afford to live in princely magnificence. But the burden of parsimony and avarice which he had voluntarily taken upon him was not to be shaken off, and the only show he made of his wealth was by purchasing on his knighthood, the rambling but comfortable house at Hampstead, and ostensibly retiring from active business.

His retirement was not a happy one. He was a stern father and a severe master. His servants hated and his wife feared him. His only son Richard appeared to inherit his father's strong will and imperious manner. Under careful supervision and a just rule he might have been guided to good; but left to his own devices outside, and galled by the iron yoke of parental discipline at home, he became reckless and prodigal. The mother—poor, timid Ellinor, who had been rudely torn from the love of her youth, her cousin, Lord Bellasis—tried to restrain him, but the headstrong boy, though owing for his mother that strong love which is often a part of such violent natures, proved intractable, and after three years of parental feud, he went off to the continent, to pursue there the same reckless life which in London had offended Sir Richard. Sir Richard, upon this, sent for Maurice Frere, his sister's son, and bought for him a commission in a marching regiment, hinting darkly of special favors to come. His open preference for his nephew had galled to the quick his sensitive wife, who contrasted with some heart-pangs the gallant prodigality of her father with the niggardly economy of her husband. Between the houses of Devine and long-descended Wotton Wade there had long been little love. Sir Richard felt that the colonel despised him for a city knight, and had heard that Lord Bellasis and his friends had often lamented the hard fortune which gave the beauty, Ellinor, to so sordid a bridegroom.

Lord Bellasis visited at Sir Richard's house during the first year of his son's marriage; but upon the birth of the son he affected a quarrel with the city knight, and cursing him for a miserly curmudgeon, departed, more desperately at war with fortune than ever, for his old haunts. He was now a hardened, hopeless old man of sixty, battered in health and ruined in pocket; but who, by dint of stays, hair-dye and courage, yet faced the world with undaunted front. Of the possessions of the house of Wotton Wade, this old man, timberless and bare, was all that remained, and its master rarely visited it.

On the evening of the 3d of May Lord Bellasis had been attending a pigeon match at Hornsey Wood, and having resisted the importunities of his companion, Mr. Lionel Crofton, who wanted him to go on into town, he had avowed his intention of striking across Hampstead to Belzize. "I have an appointment at the fir-trees on the Heath," he said, "with a parson."

"A parson?"

"Well, he is only just ordained. I met him last year at Bath, on his vacation from Cambridge, and he was good enough to lose some money to me."

"And now waits to pay it out of his first curacy. I wish your lordship joy with all my soul. Then we must push on, for it grows late."

"Thanks, my dear sir, for the 'we,' but I must go alone," said Lord Bellasis, dryly. "To-morrow you can settle with me for the sitting of last week. Hark! the clock is striking nine. Good-night."

At half-past nine Richard Devine quitted his mother's house to begin the new life he had chosen, and so, drawn together by that strange fate of circumstances which creates events, those two approached each other.

As the young man gained the middle of the path which led to the Heath, he met Sir Richard returning from the village. It was no part of his plan to seek an interview, and he would have slunk past in the gloom, but seeing him thus alone returning to a desolated home, the prodigal was tempted to utter some words of farewell and of regret. To his astonishment, however, Sir Richard passed swiftly on, with body bent forward as one in the act of falling, and with eyes unconscious of surroundings, staring straight into the distance. Half terrified at this strange appearance, Richard hurried onward,

and at a turn of the path stumbled upon something which horribly accounted for the curious action of the old man. A dead body lay upon its face in the heather, beside it was a heavy riding whip stained at the handle with blood, and an open pocketbook. Richard took up the book and read, in gold letters on the cover, "Lord Bellasis."

The unhappy young man knelt down beside the body and raised it. The skull had been fractured by a blow, but it seemed that life yet lingered. Overcome with horror—for he could not doubt but that his mother's worst fears had been realized—Richard knelt there holding the man in his arms, waiting until the murderer should have placed himself beyond pursuit. It seemed an hour to his excited fancy before he saw a light pass along the front of the house he had quit, and knew that Sir Richard had safely reached his chamber. With some bewildered intention of summoning aid he left the body, and made toward the town. As he stepped out on the path he heard voices, and presently some dozen men, one of whom held a horse, burst out upon him, and, with sudden fury, seized and flung him to the ground.

At first the young man so rudely assailed did not comprehend his own danger. His mind, bent upon one hideous explanation of the crime, did not see another obvious one which had already occurred to the mind of the landlord of The Three Spaniards.

"Heaven defend me!" cried Mr. Mogford, scanning by the pale light of the rising moon the features of the murdered man, "but it is Lord Bellasis! Oh, you villain! Jem, bring him here; p'raps his lordship can recognize him!"

"It was not I!" cried Richard Devine. "My lord, say—!" Then he stopped abruptly, and being forced on his knees by his captors, remained staring at the dying man in sudden and ghastly fear.

Those men in whom emotion has the effect of quickening circulation of the blood, reason rapidly in moments of danger; and in that terrible instant, when his eyes met those of Lord Bellasis, Richard Devine had summed up the chances of his future fortune, and realized to the full his personal peril. The runaway horse had given the alarm. The drinkers at The Spaniards Inn had started to search the Heath, and had discovered a fellow in rough costume, whose person was unknown to them, hastily quitting a spot where, beside a rifled pocketbook and a blood-stained whip, lay a dying man.

The web of circumstantial evidence had enmeshed him. An hour ago escape would have been easy. He would have had but to cry, "I am the son of Sir Richard Devine. Come with me to yonder house and I will prove to you that I have just quit it," to place his innocence beyond immediate question. That course of action was impossible now. Knowing Sir Richard as he did, and believing, moreover, that in his raging passion the old man had himself met and murdered Lord Bellasis, he saw himself in a position which would compel him to sacrifice himself. He knelt, stupefied, unable to speak or move.

"Come," cried Mogford, again; "say, my lord, is this the villain?"

Lord Bellasis rallied his falling senses, his glazing eyes stared into his son's face with a horrible eagerness; he shook his head, raised a feeble arm as though to point elsewhere, and fell back dead. "If you didn't murder him, you robbed him," growled Mogford, "and you shall sleep at Bow street to-night. Tom, run on to meet the patrol, and tell him to leave word at the Gate-house that I've a passenger for the coach! Bring him on, Jack! What is your name, eh?"

He repeated the rough question twice before his prisoner answered, but at length Richard Devine raised a pale face which stern resolution had already hardened into defiant manhood, and said, "Dawes—Rufus Dawes."

His new life had begun already; for that night one Rufus Dawes, charged with murder and robbery, lay awake in prison, waiting for the fortune of the morrow.

Two other men waited as eagerly. One, Mr. Lionel Crofton; the other, the horseman who had appointment with the murdered Lord Bellasis under the shadow of the fir-trees on Hampstead Heath. As for Sir Richard Devine, he waited for no one, for upon reaching his room he had fallen senseless in a fit of apoplexy.

(To be continued.)

Made Him Jump.

"That old plug moves pesky fast these days, Hiram. How did you break him of the habit of stopping still in the road?"

"Why, I learned to make a noise like an automobile and every time he slackens I go 'toot-toot' and 'chug-chug' and he starts off like a colt."

Terms of Peace.

Stubb—So you and your wife have decided to cease quarrelling?

Penn—Yes, and now she wants \$20 for a new fall hat.

Stubb—Asked you for it, eh?

Penn—Yes, she said as long as I admitted I was in the wrong she expected an indemnity of war.

Rapid Youth.

Miles—I understand young De Smythe is quite a spendthrift.

Giles—That's what. His father sent him to the country to spend the summer, and what do you think he did?

Miles—Gave it up.

Giles—He spent it in less than a week.

Hypocritical.

Mrs. O'Riley—Pfwat kolnd av a felly is it th' new sooperintendent do be?

O'Riley—He's wan av thim fellies that's all th' toime shlapplin' payple's faces beholnd their backs.

RAN EMPTY TRAIN.

Not a Passenger from Jersey City to Pittsburgh—Expensive Trip.

It cost the Pennsylvania railroad and the Pullman Palace Car Company \$125 on Christmas day to run a train without any passengers from Jersey City to Pittsburgh. The train, the Pennsylvania limited, one of the finest on the road, consisted of an engine, baggage car, diner and three coaches when it pulled out of Jersey City at 11:24 a. m. on Monday, and when it reached Pittsburgh at 9:35 o'clock that night, the only passengers it carried were the three changes of Pennsylvania crews and the regular Pullman crew.

The run was strictly according to schedule, but not a ticket was punched, not a meal was served, or a piece of baggage handled. Nobody worked but the engineers and firemen.

Three cooks basted fowls and created good things in the culinary line for four waiters to serve the passengers who didn't come. A barber waited in vain for "Next!" and the Pullman conductor had plenty of time to admire his new uniform. All this cost the company, founded by the late George Pullman, good cash, and, as for the Pennsylvania, why, there were three conductors who didn't conduct, while twelve brakemen and three baggage-masters twirled their thumbs instead of lantern, flag or trunks. A lone stenographer had time to waste, and the wear and tear on the train, the equipment of which represented about \$45,000, kept on with every turn of the wheels.

It is doubtful if a railroad train ever made such a run before. Joseph Brown, the Pennsylvania conductor who had charge of the train from Jersey City to Philadelphia, said that in his forty-five years as a roadrunner he never remembered such an occurrence.—New York American.

Modern Advertising.

First Actress—Have you had your diamonds stolen lately?

Second Actress—No; I quit that several years ago.

First Actress—What's your game now?

Second Actress—Running down prominent citizens in my auto.

Hard Record to Beat.

Friend—Do you think that automobiles will eventually take the place of the railroads?

Auto Enthusiast (gloomily)—I hardly think so. The railroads killed 15,000 people last year in this country alone.

Scrofula

Few are entirely free from it. It may develop so slowly as to cause little if any disturbance during the whole period of childhood.

It may then produce dyspepsia, catarrh, and marked tendency to consumption, before manifesting itself in much cutaneous eruption or glandular swelling.

It is best to be sure that you are quite free from it, and you can rely on

Hood's Sarsaparilla

to rid you of it radically and permanently. Accept no substitute, but insist on having Hood's. Liquid or tablets, 100 Doses \$1.

Get What You Ask For!

There is a Reason—Why the Good People of America buy Cascarets as Fast as the Clock Ticks.

Every second some one, somewhere, is buying a little Ten-Cent Box of Cascarets.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6—60 times to the Minute, 60 Minutes to the Hour, 3600 Boxes an Hour, 36,000 Boxes a Day of Ten Hours, 1,080,000 Boxes a Month, and then some.

Think of it—220,000 People take a Cascaret tablet each day. Millions use Cascarets when necessary.

The Judgment of Millions of Bright Americans is Infalible. They have been Buying and Taking Cascarets at that rate for over Six years.



It is not an Experiment, not an Accident or Incident, but a sound, Honest Business, based on Time-Tried-and-Tested Merit, never found wanting.

There is a Reason.

Cascarets are the implacable foe of All Disease Germs; the incomparable cleanser, purifier and strengthener of the entire Digestive Canal.

They Act like Exercise on the Bowel-Muscles, make them strong and active—able to Help Themselves do their work—keep themselves clean.

Cascarets are the safe-guard of Innocent Childhood against the Dreadful Death-dealing Dangers that threaten the Lives of the Little Ones.

They are Purely Vegetable, absolutely Harmless, always Reliable and Efficient.

Is It Your Own Hair?

Do you pin your hat to your own hair? Can't do it? Haven't enough hair? It must be you do not know Ayer's Hair Vigor! Here's an introduction! May the acquaintance result in a heavy growth of rich, thick, glossy hair! And we know you'll never be gray.

"I think that Ayer's Hair Vigor is the most wonderful hair grower that was ever made. I have used it for some time and I can truthfully say that I am greatly pleased with it. I cheerfully recommend it as a splendid preparation."—Miss V. Brock, Wayland, Mich.

Made by J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Also manufacturers of
Ayer's SASSAPARILLA, PILLS, CHERRY PECTORAL.

Sister Liked Him.

"Have you any reason to believe that your sister likes me, Willie?"

"Course she does. Just yesterday I heard her say, 'Nobody could help likin' the dear old easy mark.'—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

For forty years Pilo's Cure for Consumption has cured coughs and colds. At druggists. Price 25 cents.

A Careful Patient.

A woman whose throat had troubled her for a long time, says a writer in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, grew impatient at the slow progress she was making, and made complaint to her doctor, who said:

"Madam, I can never cure you of this throat trouble unless you stop talking, and give your throat a complete rest."

"But, doctor," objected his patient, "I'm very careful what I say. I never use harsh language or anything of that kind."

Marriage as an Institution.

The historical facts concerning marriage as an institution are probably only vaguely known to the majority of people, most of whom would doubtless be surprised to learn that the institution, as we know it to-day, is less than 500 years old. Histories of the marriage ceremony show that it was not solemnized in church as a religious rite until the time of Pope Innocent III., A. D. 1198, and was not considered a sacrament until 1443.

An Intricate Problem.

Mrs. Kbrown—That conductor insulted me.

Mr. Kbrown—How?

Mrs. Kbrown—Wanted me to pay fare for Tommy.

Mr. Kbrown—Well, Tommy is quite a chunk of a lad. He looks—

Mrs. Kbrown—And you, too? Do you mean to insinuate that I look old enough to have a child old enough to pay car fare?—Cleveland Leader.

a true, faithful, loyal servant of Mankind. Over Five Millions of Dollars have been Spent to make the merits of Cascarets known, and every cent of it would be lost, did not sound merit claim and hold the constant, continued friendship, Patronage and Endorsement of well-pleased people year after year.

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