



Hews Was Content to Play a Waiting Game.

AN HEIR TO MILLIONS

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SYNOPSIS.

Andy Meleen, aged millionaire miner, is dying and orders a will drawn up, leaving all his property to the son of a sister of whom he has heard nothing for years, and whose married name he does not know. Meleen was married years before, but left his wife after a quarrel in which he struck her. He learned later that she and their daughter were dead. The scene shifts to New York, introducing Wilfrid Stennis, who is telling his fiancée, Eunice Trevecca, what he would do if he were the possessor of wealth. In the law office of Carboy, Passavant & Cozine, attorneys for the estate of Meleen, Roger Hews reports the result of his search for heirs of Meleen. He conceals the fact that he has discovered that Meleen's daughter is living. Wilfrid Stennis replies to an advertisement for information concerning his dead mother, Martha Meleen, and is told that he is the heir to Andy Meleen's millions. He wants to marry Eunice at once, but she resolutely demurs. He meets Clara Passavant, frivolous daughter of his attorney. Eunice becomes jealous of Wilfrid's attentions to Clara. He builds a yacht and starts on a trip abroad, the Passavants being included in the party.

CHAPTER VI.

When Roger Hews was dispatched to Pennsylvania as the confidential agent of Carboy, Passavant & Cozine to verify the strange story told by Andrew Meleen on his death-bed he unearthed a far more curious and complicated series of episodes, so unusual and unexpected as to suggest to his fertile and not over-scrupulous mind a plot by which the knowledge thus gained might be turned to his own advantage in several ways. Briefly told, this is what he discovered after much painstaking piecing together of fact and inference:

When Minna Meleen found herself, as she supposed, deserted by her husband so soon after their marriage, unable to bear the taunts and gibes of the village women, she left the outskirts of Hazleton, then little more than a hamlet, and tramped across the mountains to Nanticoke. Here, being a complete stranger, she resumed her maiden name of Minna Tod, passing herself off as a widow, and making a living by sewing and doing chores. Here a daughter was born to her. A year and more had elapsed since leaving Hazleton, when seemingly authentic tidings reached her that her husband, Andrew Meleen, had been killed in battle. So to her the erstwhile fiction became a cruel and bitter fact.

Believing herself a free woman, and being still young and handsome, her scolding tongue and fiery temper somewhat cooled by her misfortunes, she permitted herself to be once more wooed and won, this time by an artisan named John Trevecca.

In less than a year she presented Trevecca also with a daughter, but this time she died during her accouchement, and the infant with her, and was buried in Nanticoke, exactly as Roger Hews reported. This event it must have been which reached the ears of Andrew Meleen, denuded of the one vital fact that Minna had

married again and that his own child still lived.

To the day of her death John Trevecca supposed she had been really a widow when she married him—as, of course, did Minna herself. The only deception she had practiced consisted in the concealment of her true name.

When Minna died, John Trevecca cherished her first-born, the little Eunice, as his own, bringing her up under his name, giving her a good education, even sending her to a country seminary for a couple of terms; then, in turn, he moved away, and no one in Nanticoke heard of him for many years.

So much of the past Roger Hews had discovered when he returned to San Francisco to report to Mr. Carboy. We have seen how he suppressed the essential facts, completely misleading the astute lawyer. When he went east for good it was with the idea of tracing John Trevecca and his stepdaughter. He hoped that the girl still lived, and that, fortified with proofs of the foregoing facts, he could eventually produce her as the rightful heir to the millions of old Andrew Meleen—for that she was his legitimate daughter, born in lawful wedlock, no one would be able to gainsay in the face of the evidence he could produce.

In one of two or three ways Hews proposed to turn this valuable secret to his own profit: If the girl were alive and unmarried and in humble circumstances, he would try to make her his wife and divulge the truth afterwards; in which case Roger Hews would have somewhat to say concerning the spending and scattering of old Andrew's hoarded wealth. If the girl were already wedded to another, then he hoped to find his account by selling her and her husband the story on the best terms possible. Thirdly, if neither of these things were the case, then he could find a market for his wares with Wilfrid Stennis, who might be expected to pay handsomely for the suppression of the secret, thus insuring to himself a clear title to the property.

It was a clear case of "Heads I win, tails you lose!" So far as he could see, only one contingency could defeat the major plot—the daughter of Minna and Andrew Meleen might be dead.

Meantime, he had no objection whatever to letting a wrongful heir enter into possession. The information he possessed would have a sure and certain market value in any case.

It took Roger Hews three or four months to trace the migrations of John Trevecca, covering, as they did, a period of ten or twelve years. But run him to earth at last he did, and found to his joy that Eunice was very much alive, and well worth winning for her own sake. But one other

thing was not so much to his liking—the discovery that Eunice and the man in possession had been friends for years, and were even then supposed to be engaged lovers. This was an adverse conjunction which the astute mind could not have imagined or foreseen—indeed, it was of a piece with all the other strange factors in the case.

However, Roger Hews was content to play a waiting game. He was very careful to keep out of Wilfrid's way, but he lost no time in making the acquaintance of Eunice and her stepfather, and at the time of Wilfrid's departure for Europe Roger had been for some months on terms of easy acquaintance with both of them. He attended the same church as Eunice, he joined the ward club and the lodge to which Trevecca belonged, and among the decent denizens of Macdougall street passed as a writer, a character which was not belied by appearances, owing to his quiet, steady demeanor and his careful acting and dressing of the part.

Nor did it take Hews long to discover that there was a little rift in the lute between Eunice and Wilfrid. This exactly suited his book. Perhaps a less observant person could have foretold such an outcome of their odd romance. Anyway, this was Roger's opportunity. As Wilfrid's visits became fewer, and the coast more clear, the other took to dropping in of an evening, ostensibly to see John Trevecca; or he would contrive to meet Eunice at church and prayer-meeting and walk home with her. He even escorted her to the park, to the theater, and to some popular concerts.

Never by word or look or action did he hint of any knowledge of her acquaintance with Wilfrid Stennis. She, on her part, from motives of pride and delicacy forebore to allow Stennis' name to pass her lips; old John Trevecca was naturally close-mouthed about his own or his daughter's affairs. So it was a three-cornered game.

At no time is the average woman supposed to be more approachable to a determined wooer than when she has been deserted or seems herself forsaken by another man. In proportion as the wound is deep, so is the healing process possibly hastened if there be a sure and certain consolation at hand. But Eunice Trevecca was not an average woman; her heart did not always rule her head.

When nearly a year had passed without so much as a line from Wilfrid, Eunice deemed herself indeed forgotten. What she had feared and foreseen, she told herself, was come to pass; and "that woman," as she termed Clara Passavant in her thoughts, had probably won him away from his early affection by her wiles and her brilliant social attainments.

"I suppose you are not in his class any longer," she said to herself bitterly. "But she will never make him happy; all she cares about is the money."

She did not, nor would not, blame Wilfrid; it was all "that woman's" evil doings. Yet she tried her best to think of him as dead to her, and to face the fact that henceforth she must piece out her life alone. But it was a sorry attempt.

Eunice had not been a woman had she failed to see the drift of Master Roger's coming and goings. Hers was too sweet a nature not to feel honored by what she supposed was the unselfish admiration of a passably good man. He had apparently succeeded in ingratiating himself with her stepfather, and his companionship proved a rather welcome diversion in those dark days. But she knew his love-quest was hopeless, and discouraged his more marked attentions, for she told herself her heart was dead.

So when Roger Hews pressed his suit—he never made love to her as Wilfrid had done—she was ready with her answer.

"It cannot be, Mr. Hews," she said, as they stood in the dim old parlor. "I esteem and admire you as a friend, but—I shall never marry."

"Perhaps I have been too hasty," said Roger suavely. "In time, possibly, you will like me better. Let me still be your friend and comrade. I will not recur to this without your permission, but some day I shall ask you again."

She shook her head in token that his was a forlorn hope, but she was too kind-hearted to inflict a hurt where she could avoid it.

"On those conditions, then," she said, "we may still be friends; but I shall never change my mind."

"Cursed upstart!" Hews muttered when he found himself on the wrong side of the door. "She loves him still! I wish he would get married himself; then, my lady, perhaps you'd sing another song!"

CHAPTER VII.

Jaded and surfeited, ready to cry "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," Wilfrid Stennis returned to his native land after two years of kaleidoscopic experiences in the chief capitals of the Old World. He had plunged into the vortex of "life," only to be flung out of the worry and whirl as a

spent swimmer is spewed out on the sand by some mad-rushing breaker.

Into those two years he greedily crowded together enough vicissitudes to last another and better-seasoned mind and body a decade at least. Perhaps his almost total lack of previous social training and preparation led the sooner to inevitable satiety; it was like a starveling gorging himself on a 12-course dinner of highly spiced and seasoned viands.

Certain it is that his one over-mastering desire at last took the form of an acute nostalgia—a longing to get away from glittering generalities and sybaritic luxury and settle down somewhere to a life of plain and polished ease.

So he left the Kestrel to follow at leisure—the original yachting party was disbanded long since—and came home by the Oregon on one of the last trips of that doomed greyhound of the ocean.

In appearance Stennis was not much changed, save for a little more fullness of face and figure, a rather tired look about the eyes, and—what was more noticeable—just a suspicion of grayness in the hair around the temples. And this at 30! In manner he had certainly improved; you would have at once set him down as a well-trained and well-groomed man of the world.

An intense and overweening craving for simpler manners and homelier fare led his steps straight from the pier to the little house in Macdougall street, around which were clustered by far the pleasantest memories he had ever known.

Eunice was at home, and herself opened the door, so no retreat, no denial, was possible.

"Why!—Mr. Stennis!" she cried in genuinely astonished accents. In the total surprise of the moment it was all she could find to say.

As he stepped across the threshold his gaze sought hers, but in the act of shaking hands—apparently a merely perfunctory ceremony on the girl's part—her eyes were veiled, and the sole token of emotion she betrayed was a little tell-tale red signal-flare in her usually olive-pale cheeks.

"Have you no word of welcome for me, Eunice?" said Wilfrid reproachfully.

"Surely!" was the answer. "We—I am glad to see you back safe and sound and looking so well. When did you arrive?"

"Scarcely an hour ago. I came straight here."

During the voyage across Wilfrid had in divers ways pictured to himself this meeting. There was to be a sort of killing of the fatted calf, although in no sense did he regard himself as enacting the role of the prodigal—he had been made too much of while abroad for that. And though he knew in his heart of hearts that he had probably forfeited all right thereto, in fancy he had dwelt with an inward glow over the glad greeting which Eunice was to extend; he had even pictured to himself in a hazy way her flinging herself into his arms and with tear-wet cheeks taking him to herself again. But this commonplace, every-day "How-de-do, Mr. Stennis!" and the total absence of emotion, grave or gay, cool or ardent, was like passing at one step from the hot sunshine of the plains of Lombardy to the ice-crowned steeps of the Alpine summits beyond.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Clark Knew His Business.

Up to the night clerk's desk goes Abe Perlmutter, a Chicago traveling man, says Success Magazine. "I wonder," he says, "could you find me somebody to play a game of pinochle for an hour or two tonight?" "Why," says the clerk, "I guess so," and he runs his eye over the register. "Boy," he calls, "page Mr. Gutwillig." Before long Mr. Gutwillig is found and introduced to the pinochle-hungry Perlmutter, and a game is arranged. "How did you know I played pinochle?" Mr. Gutwillig asks the clerk. "Oh, I—," begins the clerk. Just then emerges from the bar a young man, triple plied with wine. He staggers up to the desk and says: "Shay, I wanna fight! Dye hear? I'm lookin' fr a scrap!" Thus the clerk: "Boy, page Mr. Kelly and Mr. O'Brien."

After the Rats.

As a country Germany has fewer rats than any other in the world. This is due to the interest taken by the government in their destruction. If a boy applies to the mayor of his town he is furnished with traps and paid half a cent for every skin he brings. In large towns there are 100 boys at work all the time. The cost of traps and bait makes each skin cost the government about a penny, but as every rat destroys five dollars worth a year, this makes a tremendous saving. The mice, though destructive, are not looked after by the government. It is expected that every household will protect itself. However, a reward of a penny is paid for every three skins.

Another Idea.

"Charlie, dear," said young Mrs. Torkins, "I want you to stop at the market and get some egg plant." "But I don't like it." "No. But you like eggs. I want to feed it to the hens."

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A WARNING TO MANY

Some Interesting Facts Regarding Health Statistics.

Few people realize to what extent their health depends upon the condition of the kidneys.

The physician in nearly all cases of serious illness, makes a chemical analysis of the patient's urine. He knows that unless the kidneys are doing their work properly, the other organs cannot be brought back to health and strength.

When the kidneys are neglected or abused in any way, serious results are sure to follow. According to health statistics, Bright's disease which is really an advanced form of kidney trouble, caused nearly ten thousand deaths in 1909, in the state of New York alone. Therefore, it behooves us to pay more attention to the health of these most important organs.

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