

# AN HEIR TO MILLIONS

by FREDERICK REDDALE  
AUTHOR OF "THE OTHER MAN" ETC.  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS  
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## SYNOPSIS.

Andy Meelen, 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. Meelen 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 Meelen, Roger Hews reports the result of his search for heirs of Meelen. He conceals the fact that he has discovered that Meelen's daughter is living. Wilfrid Stennis replies to an advertisement for information concerning his dead mother, Martha Meelen, and is told that he is the heir to Andy Meelen'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 invited in the party. Roger Hews, having discovered that Eunice Trevecca is the daughter of Andy Meelen, plans to use the information to his own advantage. He proposes to Eunice and is rejected. Jaded after two years of gaiety in Europe, Wilfrid returns and immediately calls on Eunice. His attempt to renew his former relations with her meet with no encouragement. Roger Hews becomes Wilfrid's secretary. The engagement of Clara Passavant and Wilfrid is announced.

## CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

The judicious Hews permitted a full day to intervene before following up the news with a call in Macdougall street. Now, if ever, he thought, the girl might be ready to listen to reason; he counted not a little upon Eunice's womanly pique and pride, which might tempt her to show the recalcitrant Wilfrid that two could play the same game, and that she was not the one to wear the willow for another woman's fiancée. Women—and men likewise—have been known to marry for spite and repent at leisure. It was Roger's cue, as usual, to pretend to be wholly ignorant of the little tragedy going on behind the scenes. Eunice was totally unaware of the fact that he was in the employ of her old lover, and she thought she had sufficiently masked her own feelings.

When Hews came in that evening Eunice was alone, and intuitively felt that a crisis was impending. For millennial ages women have been pitting subtle wit against brute strength, developing a sixth sense which detects immediately and indubitably the benign or the malign designs of the opposite sex.

Tonight, however, she detected a tenseness of latent purpose in Roger Hews which doubtless he flattered himself was wholly hidden, and which certainly his first words did not reveal, for his talk was all about the great railroad strike then raging.

As the evening wore on, and John Trevecca failed to make his usual nine o'clock appearance, Hews inquired:

"Where is your father tonight?"

"I think he has gone upstairs," said Eunice, who had been hoping this question would not be asked. "In fact," she went on hurriedly, "I am quite worried about him; he has taken a heavy cold, and his asthma is always worse at such times."

"I do not wish to alarm you," said Hews with a well-simulated note of sympathy in his voice; "but I have noticed that he is aging rapidly; he is not the man he was a year ago."

"Oh, do you really think that?" exclaimed Eunice regretfully, and quick to take alarm. "He is perhaps not as vigorous as he used to be, but I hope he will be spared to me for many, many years! He is my only relative in the world; if I should lose him"—and the ready tears came into her eyes for the sole parent she had ever known.

"It is nothing serious, I guess," said Roger with off-hand, soothing conviction; "but your father ought to be enjoying a leisurely old age; at his time of life he should not have to work."

Eunice nodded her head in quick assent.

"So I have told him, Mr. Hews, again and again. But he persists in saying that he must toil on at the shops in order that he may keep adding to the little pile of savings which is to save me from want when he is dead and gone."

"That is a noble object," said Hews with real sincerity, "but you have it in your power to render all that labor unnecessary, and to make your father comfortable for the rest of his life."

"I don't see—" began Eunice, when, with a wave of color flooding face and forehead, she suddenly did see. How silly and blind to give him such a good opening, she thought.

Roger Hews was quick to seize his chance—in fact, he had cleverly led up to this very point.

"At the risk of offending you, Miss Eunice," he struck in, "I must recur

to the proposal I made you once before. Marry me, and your father need not worry about his future or your own. They will both be my care then."

"You promised—" said the girl reproachfully, but he took the words out of her mouth in his surcharge of feeling.

"I promised—I know it—never to recur to the theme so near to my heart without your permission. I have broken the promise because I can keep silence no longer. Eunice, I love you, dearly, madly, devotedly, with all the strength of a man who has never loved before. I cannot live without you, and I will not. Be my wife, Eunice, be my wife!"

His agitation was almost pitiable to see. The self-contained and calculating nature of the man seemed suddenly thawed and melted as the cold steel ingot is liquefied by the hot breath of the retort. In the intensity of his passion his voice trembled, his eyes blazed, his pale face assumed a brickish-red tinge; he left his seat and came to her side, putting one hand on her shoulder, and striving to take her unwilling fingers with the other.

All a-quiver and unstrung he waited for her answer. With bent head and averted gaze Eunice almost turned her back on him. A wave of repulsion and disgust swept over her, for the vehement force of which she was unable to account. Not to save her father from a hundred deaths could she marry the middle-aged wooer! Never had Roger Hews been so insistent; never had she felt less like granting what he demanded.

With an effort, evading his grasp, Eunice rose and stood facing him, the chair between them.

"I am sorry," she said, in tones full

all your maidenly pride? Don't you know that he belongs to another woman now?"

The girl winced at the cruel stab, at which evidence of the truth of his pitiful accusation Hews became even more frantic. His mask of quiet respectability was ruthlessly cast aside.

"He values you and your love about as much as one of his old shoes!" he sputtered coarsely. "He threw you over once before, and now he's done it again! He's nothing but a dirty impostor, anyway, and I'll show him up!"

Speech failed him, and he stood before her panting, choking, impotent.

Eunice Trevecca moved towards the door, and from the vantage of its opening looked him up and down in contemptuous scorn.

"I thank you, Mr. Hews," she said with cutting emphasis; "I have had a narrow escape, it seems!" and with these words she left the room.

## CHAPTER IX.

The preparations for the Stennis Passavant wedding went on apace. There was to be only a six-weeks' engagement, for Lent had just come in when the fateful words were spoken which in a measure set the crown of success upon the maneuvers of Mistress Clara.

Did she love Wilfrid? In the light of events it seems extremely doubtful; that she liked and admired him we have seen; in her eyes marriage was more a matter of creature comfort than of love pure and undefiled—but little better than a social compact, in fact; so much beauty, so much refinement, so much good birth and position in exchange for so many millions of dollars.

If the possessor of the millions happened to be a very passable and presentable sort of a fellow, why, all the better. In common with nearly every other woman, Clara Passavant shone at her best during these glamorous weeks, and Wilfrid was happy—or told himself that he ought to be.

But in reality what he regarded as happiness was only a dreamy sort of nepenthe—he guessed he had done the right thing—the thing that was expected of him by Clara and all her friends. The rest didn't matter. In fact, he told himself, nothing mattered very much now that Eunice had taken herself out of his career.

The penitential season was more

out a second glance showed that he was apparently perfectly sober.

"Well, well, man, get at it then—I am in a hurry!" exclaimed Wilfrid testily.

"Better sit down," said Hews with easy familiarity. "With your permission I'll order the horse back to the stable; I don't think you'll want to ride to-day."

So saying, he stepped to the phone and coolly gave the necessary instructions. Stennis, with one glove on, stood, riding-whip in hand, in dumb amazement at the consummate impudence of the man. It was a novel and not very agreeable experience. Hews, in return, scrutinized his employer with a provokingly cool stare, an unpleasant leer on his thin lips.

"Your manners are confoundingly unpleasant this morning, Mr. Hews," said Wilfrid, fingering the stock of his whip nervously. There was something covertly venomous in the attitude assumed by his secretary which made him itch to lay the heavy lash about his shoulders, as one would chastise an unruly dog.

"D'yer think so?" said the other, in the most offensive tone he could muster. "I guess you'll find what I've got to say still less to y'r liking."

"That's impossible to decide as long as you sit there gibbering!" retorted Wilfrid, who was fast losing patience. Hews snorted.

"You've had a pretty good time these three years past, haven't you?" he queried.

Stennis made no reply. "Yes, you've had things altogether y'r own way, spending money right and left and living on the fat of the land."

Still no answer. "And now y're going to get spliced, and live in a fine house, after jilting the poor girl y' once promised to marry!"

"That's an infernal lie, whoever told you so!" Wilfrid whipped out, stung at last into angry speech.

"Is it? Well, this what I'm going to tell y' is no lie—y' hear me? Y've got no more right to Andrew Meelen's millions than I have!"

Stennis started as though he had been bitten in the heel by an adder, but he controlled his voice admirably. "Oblige me by saying that over again," he answered quietly.

"I tell yer that y've been spending money that doesn't belong to yer—not a single, solitary red cent of it. Y're no more the rightful heir of Andy Meelen than I am! Is that plain enough?"

Wilfrid stepped to the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket.

"If you are sane and sober, you'll understand that you cannot leave this room until you have proved every word—or taken the consequences," Stennis, shaking the heavy riding-quilt suggestively.

"Oh, I know what I'm talking about," rejoined Hews airily; "my facts are all O. K."

"Let me have the facts then—not mere windy assertions," retorted the other. "I am not to be frightened or blackmailed, Mr. Hews."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Usurer in High Society.

Frank Marshall White contributes to Harper's Weekly an account of the methods of money lenders on both sides of the Atlantic. The loan sharks who exploit the poor in America are represented in England, says the author, by usurers who prey upon post obits and delayed inheritances. Of such a type was the celebrated Sam Lewis, who actually forced his way into good society by virtue of his hold over the aristocracy. "Everybody in London knew Lewis. Was there a charity bazaar, for instance, where ladies of title were selling boutonnières and ices, or beautiful actresses mixing drinks? There was Lewis paying the highest price for everything in sight. Was royalty laying the corner stone of a hospital or asylum, to which ceremony the subscribers to the erection fund had been invited? Lewis stepped to the crimson carpet across the sidewalk from the tallest landau, with the biggest horses and the most stately coachman."

## War and Automobiles.

If war is hell, so are automobiles driven by a drunken or fool man. War hath her sublime victories; autos, too. All through nature some kind of deadly war has been the main method of selecting the fittest for survival. Religion and love may in the future be the greatest raisers of the world, but speaking of the past, war has done most of all, for war has killed off a lot of savage men who would have held civilization back.—N. Y. Press.

## The Philosopher of Folly.

"I need not tell you," says the Philosopher of Folly, "that when an orator starts with the words 'I need not tell you,' he goes right ahead and tells you what he needn't."

## Has Good Appetite.

A baby walrus of six months will eat about 50 pounds of codfish in the course of a day.

## Cost of Crime in Britain.

Crime in the United Kingdom costs the state about \$30,000,000 a year.

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**Rivers' Joke.**

Rivers had just got home and was stumbling over the things in the dark hallway. "What are you growling about, dear?" called out Mrs. Rivers from the floor above. "I am growling," he answered in his deepest bass voice, "to down the barking of my shins!"

**Chance for Compromise.**

Cobble—I should like to lend you that ten dollars, old man, but I know how it would be if I did—it would end our friendship. Stone—Well, old chap, there has been a great deal of friendship between us. I think if you could make it five, we might worry along on half as much.—Life.

**Time to Think.**

A man who is really thoughtful of the Family Name should begin to think about it quite a while before it occurs to him to enter the name of John Doe on the police blotter.—Aitch upon Globe.

## Biliousness

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**REMEMBER**

**PISO'S**

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"I Am Not to Be Frightened or Blackmailed, Mr. Hews."

of womanly sympathy, "that you have spoken of this again, Mr. Hews. What my answer was six months ago must be my answer still. I do not love you, and I never could love you as a woman should love the man she marries. I am loath to give you pain, but I am telling you the simple truth. I must seem cruel to be kind."

The words were uttered with such quiet sincerity as to carry to the wretched man who heard them the conviction that the fortress of her heart was unassailable and would never be won by him. Roger Hews realized that he had failed utterly, and he threw discretion to the four winds.

"You mean you are telling me only part of the truth!" he shouted savagely, his real nature coming to the surface under the rebuff, now that there was nothing to be gained by further disguise. "Why not make a clean breast of it, and confess that you are still infatuated with that upstart ass, Wilfrid Stennis! Where's

than half over, and there lacked but two short weeks of the wedding day, when Roger Hews fired his mine. Patient as a ferret, he bided his time; he had scored one failure; in this second attempt to use his power there must be no mishap or miscarriage. According to custom, he waited upon Stennis immediately after breakfast to open the mail and receive his instructions for the day.

The usual routine was gone through, and Wilfrid was about to start for his morning gallop with his fiancée in the park when the secretary spoke:

"Can you give me your attention for a few minutes, Mr. Stennis?"

"Anything important?" quoth Wilfrid. "Can't you let it lie over? I have an appointment at 11."

"It is most important, and it can't lie over!" said Hews truculently. Stennis eyed the man curiously; the tone verging upon the insolent, his first thought was that the immaculate Roger had been imbibing too freely.