

A MONSTROUS WRONG.

CHAPTER XLV.

It was the morning subsequent to the betrothal of Dolores with Gifford Melcombe. The old Earl of St. Maur sat alone in the great, dim library of his town mansion. He had been busy writing letters but the pen had dropped from his fingers and his thoughts had turned from political affairs to the great problem that had for years occupied him so entirely—the problem of the existence of his son's child. Had a child been born of Lord Oswald Lennox's ill-fated first marriage? And if so, did that child still live? "I would give all the remaining years of my life," Lord St. Maur said to himself—"all the years which I have left of life and vigor, I may reasonably expect to live—if I could find that grandchild! Strange, that no trace of that poor lost Lennox has ever been discovered—strange that she and the child—if there was a child—disappeared so completely! They must both be dead! And I shall go to my grave without My distant kinship will inherit my title and estates, and my line will be—hard, bitter, terrible!" He was brooding over this great grief of his life, this magnificent mystery, when the door opened, and Sir Basil Nugent was announced. The old lord arose to receive his visitor with a warmth of welcome that showed how strong a hold the young baronet had taken upon his heart. "I beg you will excuse my early visit, my lord," said Sir Basil, "I desire to consult with you about a different plan of search for Miss Wynn. I have not slept since seeing her last night. Her said face, so thin, so pale, so beautiful before my eyes. She is poor and in trouble. But how are we to find her? She is so near us, and yet she is as far from us in this great wilderness of a country as it is distant from her home!" The old lord looked at his visitor with sudden, keen suspicion. Sir Basil's tones and manner were so different from those which he had known in the past. "What is Miss Wynn to you, Nugent?" he asked. "I thought that you were helping to find her for me."

When the one mortification of his professional career. The earl greeted him courteously, inviting him to be seated. "You have come to report more false news, have you?" he said, with a slight frown. "I hope you do not intend to throw up the case again." "No, my lord," answered Paxon. "I am glad to be able to report at last a partial success."

nox. And her daughter, the Lady Dolores Lennox, is my lawful grandchild and heiress." Old Mrs. Redburn dropped back into her chair. Her ghastly visage and open, convulsed eyes alarmed her son and his wife, as well as the visitors. Water was brought, and presently the old lady recovered her consciousness. She looked wildly at the earl, and then sank upon her knees before him, crying: "A lawful wife! Oh, say those words again! A lawful wife!" "Yes, madam," said the earl, "the lawful wife of Lord Oswald Lennox, my only son, as he is to-day, if living and unmarried, his lawful widow."

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