

to the veranda and sat dow on a low basket chair, which creaked under the weight of his tall, powerful frame.

By A.

Lola Crawshay, who was sitting alone at the end of the veranda, looked up from her book and first greeted him with a glance and a smile, which made his pulses beat faster, and then changed and said in a tone which implied rebuke:

"You said you would go with the others.'

go right on and find the little woman game. and my cousin and stop with them. just as I said, but-well, I thought of this cozy veranda, and that-that you" -he glanced at her, checked himself and changed the finish of the sentence, adding-"that on such an evening one gets such fine views of the scenery, you know, and all that, and so here I am. That's all." And he turned his smiling, or desire to come between them. handsome face to her.

"You had no right to come back," said Lola gravely and almost coldly, and she closed her book and gathered up the fancy work which she had been doing. Then she rose from her chair and stood just where the sun shone apon her, bathing her in golden light and making her magnificent beauty seem | temper which she knew so well how to almost supernatural in its dazzling radiance.

made.

"Will you let me pass, Sir Jaffray?" she asked, purposely avoiding his eyes. He jumped to his feet and reddened.

"Do you mean you are going in? Have I offended you? Don't go."

he looked down at her and seemed to search for her eyes with his. After a long pause she lifted her face and turned apon him a gaze which thrilled him till the place, he did not attempt to conceal he almost trembled with the passion his pleasure, and he would have been which raged in him

Then she made as if to speak, but said nothing, and her eyes fell again, as the strength of her hold over him, she though beaten down by the ardent look sent him away continually to be with the bent on her, and instead of speaking the others, while she herself would avoid him ostentatiously.

the moved on as if to pass him without meaking, but he barred her path. and as though unwittingly she brushed her chair, leaning her arm on the veranda and her face on her hand and sitting quite still, like the statue of embarrassed and emotional leveliness.

the verende and made no effort to speak an occasion, but always they seemed to for awhile, content to feast his eyes | be interrupted just when he had begun

tively that any encouragement on her part would tend to estrange Mrs. De Witt from her and being quite unwilltempest clouds, better apart. With us ing to have so agreeable a house closed against her, Lola held herself in the strongest reserve against him and when other things failed made an excuse and returned to Mosscombe.

Perceiving this and knowing intui-

The baronet soon followed her, however, and, going to Walcote manor, much to the delight of his mother, who

"I know, and I meant it right | quite misunderstood the reason of hig enough. I always do when-when you return, began to stalk Lola with as pack me off. I got nearly as far as the much persevering patience as he had town, and upon my word I meant to been wont to show with some rare

> At that time she was on very friendly terms with Beryl Leycester, and her quick woman's wit had shown her how strongly Beryl, who hid her feelings behind a mask of reserve, loved the man whom, by the common desire of both their families, she was to marry. Nor save for the light in her eyes. at the time had Lola the least intention How that design was first formed she all self control.

never quite clearly knew. The baronet's persistency was one great cause, while her determination had been greatly helped by an incident in which his mother, who had never liked her, had say a word more." slighted her and insulted the memory of her father and stirred the fires of that control. But when once the purpose was formed nothing could stay it, and

Her companion gazed almost like one she set herself, to weave such a web of bewitched by the glorious picture she witchery over the man as he could not hope to break.

She knew that the climax was fast approaching, when, hearing that Mrs. De Witt and Beryl Leycester were going to stay at Torquay and that Sir Jaffray was to be there at the same time, she The last was a whispered appeal, and persuaded Mrs. Villyers to go there before them and thus made it appear that

the baronet had followed her. When he found Lola was staying in with her from morning till night if she

would have allowed it; but, knowing avoid him ostentatiously.

This treatment only fed the fever of his passion, however, and, absorbed in his love for her and desire to have her against him, then stopped, drew back for his wife, he was perplexed by the and started and sank down again into thousand lover's fears and uncertainties which the coquetry of her manner toward him created. A hundred times in the first few days

of this visit he had resolved to ask her Sir Jaffrey leaned against the rail of to marry him, and he sought to make

you with her, talking over all your friendship. You and I are best apart. plans with the frank innocence of You think you love me now. You will come to love her in time. You will be childhood, and it will be so pleasant to travel with-dear Mrs. Villyers." happier with her. You and I are two

A dry little smile passed over Sir life can only be a full heaven or a rag-Jaffray's face. ing hell. I am afraid of you." And she "You are a keen thought reader." he

seemed to cower before him. "Your said. words scorch me. Go away, or let me "What plot are you two hatching now?" said Beryl, looking from one to go. Let us never meet again. If you have any pity in you, think of what it the other. "I hoped you were going to stay," she began to Sir Jaffray, but is to burn as I burn with this love then checked herself. which you have kindled and to know

that I can never-wait! I am mad. Oh. "I had intended to stop, Beryl," he said, looking at her steadily, "but I am why, why did I ever see you?" She compelled to go home to see the mother stopped suddenly and stood pressing after this letter," holding it up. "If

you wish it, of course I'll come back. Sir Jaffray stood by her, immovable, You know I always like to do what but infinitely moved, conscious of nothyou wish if possible. The mother knows ing save the wild thumping of his heart that too." against his ribs and of the mad, bewildering thought that she loved him.

Beryl so rarely showed her feelings that the deep scarlet blush which now "Let me go in, Sir Jaffray, please," said Lola, her whole manner changed, rushed over her face, coloring it a vivid red from the roots of her rich brown hair downward as she rose and made As she passed she touched him again, and he drew back as if afraid of losing an excuse and went indoors hastily, surprised both her companions, and es-"One moment," he said, keeping his pecially Mrs. De Witt, who did not see anything in the baronet's words to voice as steady as he could. "I understand now. You are right. I will do cause it and did not understand the what you wish, and till then I wild not reference in them.

"Where are we all this afternoon. He stood back and let her pass with-Magog?" she asked in perplexity.

"Where we were not last week and shall not be tomorrow." he answered sententiously and with a smile.

"Are you turning sphinx?" she asked, a little irritably.

"No, I'm only the soothsayer, waiting to see what I ought to say and acting on instructions." And with that he went into the house.

"If I don't read that very clever Miss Lola's hand in this, may I never flirt again!" exclaimed Mrs. De Witt to herself as soon as she was left alone. "But I'll find out from her what passed this afternoon, if I have to ask the question point blank."

Meanwhile Sir Jaffrey had gone to read over again and answer the letter from his mother, and he ensconced himself in a corner of the smoking room.

"I wish she hadn't gone so soon," he said-he wasn't thinking of his mother OPENING then, however. "It makes it look as if I was following her; but, by Jove, it can't be that-it can't be that; she's in earnest and means to part altogether." The bare thought of this filled him with a feverish fear. "Wish I'd knocked this business about Beryl on the head before I spoke. Poor little girl"-this was Beryl-"I wish I'd never-but what's the good of wishing? I never had a ghost of an idea that I'd got such passion in me till I met Lola. Beryl's a good sort, but it's no use to think of that now. I couldn't marry her feeling U. she's the most innocent growth I ever met-fc. a woman. She's so fond of as I do. I wish-oh, what an infernal dear Lola too. I wonder where she is. nuisance it is when your people set to work matchmaking! And one's so help-They're the sweetest pair I know." "I think no end of Mrs. Villyers." less-worse than if there was a regular understanding. I could go to her then "Of course; we all do. She's such an and not with the truth, but I can't as obliging soul, too-coming all this way it is without posturing as conceited ass from her comfortable home, and just to enough to assume that she's in love please Lola. I hope I shall be as good with me. I hope it hasn't gone so far to my young people when I'm her age." "One can't think of you as ever being as that. I wish I'd never-gad, I hope she won't feel as I should feel if things her age," he answered, smiling. went wrong now with Lola. Wonder "You don't seem to think of me even why the mother is so down on her. She as I am, judging by this afternoon," oughtn't to have written such a letter was the retort, prompted by jealousy as this. She wouldn't if she'd known. and helped with a flash of her brown She'll be all right when she does know. Let me read it again quietly and with-But Sir Jaffray wasn't looking at out that sharp little devil's eyes boring holes in my skull. She's a little demon.' her and missed this, and his answer And with this complimentary shaft

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FISH INVOICES.

and the second s



seeing nothing, lost in the thought that he had won her, a queen among women. **OHAPTER II.** LADY WALCOTE INTERVENES. Sir Jaffray was still on the veranda, smoking and day dreaming, after his

her hands to her face.

interview with Lola, when Mrs. De Witt and her cousin Beryl returned to the hotel from the walk on which he ought to have accompanied them, and the former surprised him on the balcony

and before he could escape. Her shrewd instincts scented mischief. "By yourself, Magog?" she said. She

generally had a pet name for her male intimates as a sort of compromise between the Christian and surnames. This was chosen in reference to the baronet's great size and strength. "I thought some one was with you-Mrs. Villyers, of course"-this dryly-"and had perhaps stopped your coming with us." "No; I think she's in her rooms some-

where," he answered, looking at her. "She's a sweet old lady, I think, for an innocent, and I certainly do think

cumstances Beryl at any rate had a

"Yes, perhaps she had. I'm afraid

so. I'm sorry." His companion's words had reminded him of what Lola had

"Afraid so! You are not generally

more afraid to do what you ought to do

than what you ought not." This was

said rather sharply. "Why didn't you

"Beryl had you, and you had Beryl," he answered with provoking slowness.

"Myself, of course," he returned,

She got up, too, and stood in his way.

"I don't see why you should want to

"That would be difficult from your

sharp eyes, wouldn't it?"' And he smiled

"Why don't you tell me all about it,

"There's so little in 'it,' you know.

"I see. You would rather I learned

"I never said there was anything to

it from the other, then. I can ask her.'

Only two letters-I and another."

hide what you've been doing."

down at her good humoredly.

right to expect you.'

"And you had?"

come?"

getting up,

then?"

ask, please.

said, and he felt uneasy.

out another word, watching her with begging eyes till the last hem of her dress disappeared and the soft frou frou of the silk was lost in the room. Then he turned his face to the light, and a smile of proud triumph lighted it as he stood and gazed at the sea, and

the woods, and the landscape, though

mpon her hestrous beauty and to yield to frame the question, and his wits himself up to the fail enjoyment of the were too dazzled by his love to see that smotions she had roused.

He was mad for the love of her, and she knew it well enough and meant to be his wife.

But she knew also that there were difficulties to be surmounted first and that she must act warily and cautiously If she was to succeed.

It was more than 18 months since that scene on the Devil's rock, and she had already made excellent use of her time in England. She had found Mrs. Villgers, the widow to whom her father had sent her, seady at first to give her a very cold and formal welcome, commands of daty, sympathetically interpreted, might require, but unwilling, on account of the ill odor of Lola's fa-ther with his family, to take her into the house on the footing of an intimate and loving friend.

But Lots had amply justified her shrewd old father's judgment, and the winning text, the olever usefulness, the supple adaptability and the patient temper which the girl never failed to show won the old lady's heart, until she was almost loath to det her out of her sight.

As the old man had predicted, more-over, Mrs. Villyers' introduction opened the doors of every desirable house in the county, and Lola's beauty and shrewdness did the rest. She was the beautiful Miss Grawshay, and nobody ever tried to remember that her father had enjoyed and deserved a reputation for such ill conduct as had made his friends pension him off on condition that he never set foot in his native country.

Lola was not long idle, moreover, in making her plans. She meant to marry. She had heard nothing of the man who had forced her to marry him, and she believed him dead. If he was still living, it was almost impossible for him to find her, she thought. Anyway she would take the risk.

The homage which the men all round the neighborhood were eager to pay her wherever she went soon convinced her that she could marry almost whom she pleased, and, as she had long convinced herself that she had no love to give and no reason to fear any yielding to a weakness of the kind, she carried a very cool head indeed behind her very glowing and fire raising beauty.

Her final decision as to the man she would marry came as much by accident as design on her part. Among her distant connections was a

bright, shrewd, gossiping little woman, Mrs. De Witt, whose married life was in Lola's views a curiosity. The hus-

Lola herself contrived many of the interruptions.

But on the day when he found her said Sir Jaffray. alone on the veranda he had returned determined that he would wait no longer. He was hungering for the knowledge that she loved him. When she was

near, he could think of nothing else. His mother's objection to the marriage, his more than half engagement to marry Beryl-every hindrance and caution was burned like dead grass in the fierce, hot flame of his passion.

Thus he looked at her with the hot eyes of desperate longing as she sat eyes. with her face resting against her hand and her eyes bent down, and it was like a sweet delirium to believe, as he did. was lamentably commonplace. "That's all you know." that the emotion which had brought the blood to her cheeks and made her bosom rise and fall in loveliest confu-

sion was due to the feelings which he had roused in her. After a long pause he moved slowly

nearer to her and nerved himself to speak. As he sat down close to her she turned her head and flashed a rapid glance right into his eyes and then as quickly turned away, the hot blood surging

over her face in a deep blush. "I want to end this suspense," h said in a tone little louder than a whisper. "I can't bear it any longer. It's not fair to either of us. I came back on purpose." There was a pause of embarrassment between each sentence. Lola made no reply, but she was thinking fast what was the best course

for her to take. Sir Jaffray gathered himself for an effort and a resolute look came into his face, knitting his brows and setting his lips for a moment before he spoke again. Then, forcing himself to be calm, he went right to the point.

"I love you, Lols, and I want you for my wife.' There was no mistaking the ring of intense sincerity or of concentrated feeling in the calm, strong tone, and the girl felt a flush of triumph as she recognized it. It promised her a certain vic-

"Do you know that Beryl has had tory. But she knew that it was not to letters from the manor?" asked Mrs. De be won yet, and she played her part Witt, changing her line suddenly, irriwith consummate skill. At first she turned toward him with tated at his fencing with her. a look of infinite sweetness on her face "How can I? I haven't seen her since and with the light of love beaming in they came." her eyes, but she checked herself as "Your mother has written to her." suddenly, drew back and then rose. This was said as though with special "That is an insult, Sir Jaffray, and significance. a wrong which you at least might have "The dear mother! She has the best heart in the world," he replied. spared me," she cried. The words struck him like a slap in

"But she doesn't like the second letter of that little 'it.' '' And she sought the face. "An insult? A wrong? To ask you to

at Mrs. De Witt he took his mother's "Why didn't you come this afterletter out of the envelope and read it noon, then, as you said you would? again: You know very well that under the cir-

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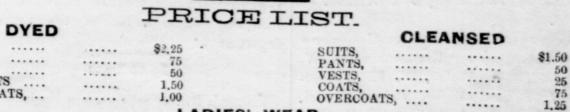
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