

# THE HEIR OF SANDLEIGH

## OR THE STEWARD'S SON

### CHAPTER I.

In a front room of a cottage perched on a Levenshire cliff lay a woman waiting for that messenger who comes to all of us sooner or later. The rays of the setting sun, which dyed the scarcely rippling sea a brilliant crimson, fell upon her face and upon that of a young girl who knelt beside the bed and held the dying woman's hand. The face of the woman was softened by the approaching climax, and but for a strange restlessness and uncertainty in her eyes it would have been wholly at peace.

She had been silent some time, watching the reflection of the sunlight on the wall, and the young girl had been watching her, silently, too, with tear-dimmed eyes.

At last the woman turned her head and looked at the lovely face and forced a smile.

"What time is it, Miss Norah?" she asked in a faint voice.

"Nearly eight, Catherine, dear," she replied.

"I shall sink with the sun," she said, not complainingly, but with the listless apathy of one who is waiting and longing for peace.

The girl's tears fell, but she cried quietly and unobtrusively, and even endeavored to conceal them from her companion, who saw them, nevertheless.

"Don't cry, dear," she said. "Don't be unhappy. I should not be if I were not leaving you alone—all alone!"

"Don't think of me, Catherine, dear," said the girl, forcing back her tears. "Oh, if there were anything I could do!"

"There is nothing," she said feebly. "I am quite willing to go, but for the thought of leaving you, Norah, I have done my duty—"

"Oh, Catherine!"

"I have tried, since your mother died, to be a mother to you!"

"You have been all that a mother could be to me—all, Catherine!" responded the girl sobbingly.

A strange look came into the dying woman's face and she raised her hand and laid it lovingly, wistfully on the girl's head.

"And you have loved me as if—as if I had been your mother, dear?" she asked, with a sudden intensity.

"Yes, yes, you know that, dear," assented Norah fervently. "Why, I scarcely remember any other mother than you. You have been—"

She could not get any further.

"Yes, I know," she murmured. "It has been the only thing that has made it possible. If you had not loved me, Norah—"

She stopped and was silent for a moment or two. Then she said: "Norah, have you thought of what you will do when I am gone?"

"No, dear. How could I think of anything but you? You must not be unhappy or anxious about me."

"You—you will stay here, Norah," she said, and her voice had grown more feeble, "till—till—for a time. The people will look after you as long as you stay. They are fond of you and kind, and there is money. You have the last quarter's allowance."

"Don't trouble about me, Catherine, dear."

"There is nothing else that troubles me, only you—only you, dear." The restless, hesitating look came into her eyes and she moved her head to and fro on the pillow. "Have I done wisely?" she murmured, more to herself than the girl. "God knows! I have done it for the best; but—ah, Norah, if I were only sure!" she gasped.

"It is all so dark, so troubled!" continued the woman. "If I could only tell you—but I cannot, I dare not. Not now! It is too late!"

"What is it that worries you, Catherine, dear? Is it anything you want to tell me; anything you wish me to do?"

The woman looked at her long and wistfully, with a tenderness which could not have been deeper in a mother's eyes; then she sighed again.

"No, it is nothing, Norah—nothing I can tell you; but there is something you must do."

"What is it? I will do anything, everything, you tell me."

"There is a letter under the pillow," said the dying woman faintly. Norah put her hand under the pillow and drew out a closed envelope.

"Read—read the address," said Catherine Hayes.

Hastily wiping the tears from her eyes Norah read it:

The Earl of Arrowdale,  
The Court,  
Sandleigh,  
Berks.

At another time she might have expressed surprise, but now there was no room for any emotion but grief.

"The Earl of Arrowdale, yes," said the woman slowly. "You will post it—with your own hand—when I am gone; to-night, Norah, dear?"

"Yes, Catherine," said Norah simply.

"You don't ask me what it is, Miss Norah?"

"Not unless you care to tell me, dear."

"No, I will not tell you; you will know soon. I—I—" she struggled as if with some strong emotion, and for the first time her eyes filled with tears. "I can't tell you, Norah, and yet it is so hard—so hard!"

And the tears rolled down the wan cheeks. "Norah, say once more, 'Catherine, I love you! I will never think badly of you, whatever may happen—whatever I may hear. Whatever people say of you, I will love you!'"

"Catherine, dear, dear Catherine, you know I have loved you and that I shall always love you, whatever may happen! What can happen to make me so wicked and ungrateful as to forget you or think of you any way but as my second mother?"

Catherine Hayes opened her eyes and fixed them on the girl's face with inexpressible tenderness; then, with a sigh, they closed, to open no more on this mystery which we call Life.

Norah uttered one cry, and, as if she had been waiting for it as a signal, an old lady opened the door and came gently to her side.

"Come away, Miss Norah. Come away, dear."

The girl kissed the white face and stood looking down at it for a minute through her blinding tears, then allowed the old lady to lead her from the room.

When the first shock of grief had subsided she became conscious of the letter which she still held in her hand. She got up and put on her hat and walked down to the post office in the village. She might have sent it, but she had promised to post it and she would obey the one and last request which had been made by the woman who, though a servant, had been, as she said, a mother to her.

A week later an old gentleman in a frock coat and a white hat climbed the narrow path that led to the cottage and knocked at the little green door.

He was very warm, for the month was June and the sun blazing in the most gallant fashion, and as he took off his white hat and wiped his bald forehead he puffed and gasped, although he was by no means fat.

"Mrs. Jordan, I believe, ma'am," he said to the old lady who answered the knock.

"I am Mrs. Jordan," sir," she replied.

"And this, of course, is Cliff Cottage?" he said, raising his hat and fixing his gold eyeglasses. "My name is Petherick, Petherick of Gray's Inn, ma'am, and I wish to see Miss Norah Frere."

"Walk in, if you please, sir," she said, opening the door of a neat little parlor. "Miss Frere is out at present, but I am expecting her every moment."

Mr. Petherick walked in and looked round the small room with keen but not unkindly glance. It was the best room in the cottage, and it was not without a certain refinement. Two or three volumes of modern poets lay on the table and some etchings of the best masters hung on the walls.

There was something about the room that was not only cozy but tasteful, and with that indefinable tone which is felt, though it cannot be described.

(To be Continued.)

## The Price of Liberty

### CHAPTER LVII.

Bell's professional enthusiasm got the better of his curiosity for the moment. It was a nice psychological problem. Already Steel was impulsively busy in the conservatory pulling the pots down. It was a regretful thing to have to do, but everything had to be sacrificed. David shut his teeth grimly and proceeded with his task.

"What on earth are you doing?" Bell asked, with a smile.

"Pulling the place to pieces," David responded. "I daresay I shall feel pretty sick about it later on, but the thing has to be done. Cut those wires for me, and let those creepers down as tenderly as possible. We can't get to the little pots until we have moved the big ones."

Bell coolly declined to do anything of the kind. He surveyed the two graceful banks of flowers there, the carefully trained creepers trailing so naturally and yet so artistically from the roof to the ground, and the sight pleased him.

"My dear chap," he said, "I am not going to sit here and allow you to destroy the work of so many hours. There is not the slightest reason to disturb anything. Unless

I am greatly mistaken, Van Sneek will lay his hand upon the ring for us without so much as the sacrifice of a blossom."

"I don't fancy so," Van Sneek replied. "I can't remember."

"Well, you are going to," Bell said, cheerfully. "Did you ever hear of artificial memory?"

"The sort of thing you get in law courts and political speeches?" David suggested. "All the same, if you have some patent way of getting at the facts I shall be only too glad to spare my poor flowers. Their training has been a labor of love with me."

Bell smoked on quietly for some time. He toyed with the red blossoms which had so stimulated Van Sneek's recollection, then tossed a spray over to Van Sneek and suggested that the latter should put it in his button-hole.

"So as to have the fragrance with you all the time," he said.

Van Sneek obeyed quietly, remarking that the scent was very pungent. The Dutchman was restless and ill at ease; he seemed to be dissatisfied with himself—he had the air of a man who has set out with two or three extremely important matters of business and who has completely forgotten what one of them is.

"You needn't distress yourself," David said, kindly.

"I beg your pardon," Bell said tartly. "He is to do that very same thing. Mental exercise never hurts anybody. Van Sneek is going to worry till he puzzles it out. Will you describe the ring to us?"

The Dutchman complied at considerable length. He dwelt on the beauty of the workmanship and the exceeding fineness of the black pearls; he talked with the freedom and expression of the expert. Bell permitted him to ramble on about historic rings in general. But all the same he could see that Van Sneek was far from easy in his mind.

Now and then a sudden gleam came into his eyes; memory played for the fragment of a second on a certain elusive chord and was gone.

"Were you smoking the night you came here?" Bell asked, suddenly.

"Yes," Van Sneek replied, "a cigarette. Henson handed it over to me. I don't deny that I was terribly frightened. I smoked the cigarette out of bravado."

"You went into the conservatory yonder and admired the flowers," Bell observed.

Van Sneek looked up with astonishment and admiration.

"I did," he confessed. "But I don't see how you know that."

"I guessed it. It takes the brain some little time to get level to the imagination. And as soon as you came face to face with Henson you knew what was going to happen. You were a little dazed and frightened, and a little overcome by liquor into the bargain. But even then, though you were probably unconscious of it yourself, you were seeking some place to hide the ring."

"I rather believe I was," Van Sneek said, thoughtfully.

"You smoked a cigarette there. Where did you put the end?"

Van Sneek rose and went into the conservatory. He walked directly to a large pot of stephanotis in a distant corner and picked the stump of a gold-tipped cigarette from thence.

"I dropped it in there," he said. "Strange; if you had asked me that question two minutes ago I should not have been able to answer it. And now I distinctly remember pitching it in there and watching it scorch some of that beautiful lace-like moss. There is a long trail of it hanging down behind. I recollect how funny it occurred to me, even in the midst of my danger, that the trail would look better brought over the front of the pot. Thus."

He lifted the long, graceful spiral and brought it forward. Steel nodded, approvingly.

"I came very near to dropping the ring in there," Van Sneek explained. "I had it in my fingers—I took it for the purpose from my waistcoat-pocket. Then I saw Henson's eye on me and I changed my mind. I wish I had been more sober."

Bell was examining a pot a little lower down. A piece had been chipped off, leaving a sharp, clean, red edge with a tiny tip of hair upon it.

"You fell here," he exclaimed. "Your head struck the pot. Here is a fragment of your hair on it. It is human hair beyond a doubt, and the shade matches to a nicety. After that—"

A sudden cry broke from the Dutchman.

"I've got it!" he exclaimed. "You have cleverly led my mind into the right direction. The only marvel is that I did not think of it before. You will find the ring in the pot where the tuberos grows. I am quite certain you will find it amongst the moss at the base."

David carefully scooped up all the loose moss from the pot and laid it on the study table. Then he shook the stuff out, and something glittering lay on the table—a heavy ring of the most exquisite and cunning workmanship, with a large gem in the centre, flanked by black pearls on either side. Van Sneek took it in his fingers lovingly.

"Here you are," he said. "Ach, the beauty! Well, you've got it now, and do you take care of it lest it falls into my hands again. If I got a chance I would steal it once more, and yet again and again. Ah, what mischief those things cause, to be sure!"

The speaker hardly knew how much mischief the ring in question had caused, nor did his companions seek to enlighten him. David wrapped it

up carefully and placed it in his pocket.

"I'm glad that is settled," he said. "And I'm glad that I didn't have to injure my flowers. Bell, you really are a most wonderful fellow."

Bell smiled with the air of a man who is well satisfied with himself. At this moment a servant came in with a message to the effect that Inspector Matley desired to see Mr. Steel on important business.

"Couldn't have come at a better time," David murmured. "Ask Mr. Marley in here."

Marley came smilingly, yet mysteriously. He evinced no surprise at the sight of Van Sneek. He was, doubtless, aware of the success of the operation on the latter. He particularly desired to know where Mr. Reginald Henson was to be found.

"This is a queer place to look for him," said Steel.

"But he was here yesterday," Marley protested. "He had an accident."

"Bogus," said Steel. "We turned him out of the house. Is he wanted?"

Marley explained that he was wanted on three different charges; in fact, the inspector had the warrants in his pocket at the present moment.

"Well, it's only by good chance that you haven't got one for me," David laughed. "If you have ten minutes to spare, between Van Sneek and myself we can clear up the mystery of the diamond-mounted cigar-case for you."

Marley had the time to spare, and indeed, he was keen enough to hear the solution of the mystery. A short explanation from David, followed by a few pithy, pertinent questions to Van Sneek, and he was perfectly satisfied.

"And yet I seemed to have an ideal case against you, Mr. Steel," he said. "Seems almost a pity to cut a career like Mr. Henson's short, does it not? Which reminds me that I am wasting time here. Any time you and Van Sneek happen to be passing the police-station the cigar-case is entirely at your disposal."

And Marley bustled off upon the errand that meant so much for Reginald Henson. He was hardly out of the house before Ruth Gates arrived. She looked a little distressed; she could not stay for a moment, she declared. Her machine was outside, and she was riding over to Longdean without delay. A note had just been sent to her from Chris.

"My uncle is in Paris," she said. "So I am going over to Longdean for a few days. Lord Littimer is there and Frank also. The reconciliation is complete and absolute. Chris says the house is not the same now, and that she didn't imagine that it could be so cheerful. Reginald Henson—"

"My dear child, Henson is not there now."

"Well, he is. He went there last night, knowing that he was at his last gasp, with the idea of getting more money from Lady Littimer. To his great surprise he found Littimer there also. It was anything but a pleasant interview for Mr. Henson, who was finally turned out of the house. It is supposed that he came back again, for they found him this morning in the grounds with one of the dogs upon him. He is most horribly hurt, and lies at the lodge in a critical condition. I promised Chris that I would bring a message to you from Lord Littimer. He wants you and Dr. Bell to come over this afternoon and stay to dinner."

"We'll come, with pleasure," David said. "I'll go anywhere to have the chance of a quiet hour with you, Ruth. So far ours has been rather a prosaic wooing. And, besides, I shall want you to coach me up on my interview with your uncle. You have no idea how nervous I am. And at the last he might refuse to accept me for your husband."

Ruth looked up fondly into her lover's face.

"As if he could," she said, indignantly. "As if any man could find fault with you."

David drew the slender figure to his side and kissed the sweet, shy lips.

"When you are my wife," he said, "and come to take a closer and tenderer interest in my welfare—"

"Could I take a deeper interest than I do now, David?"

"Well, perhaps not. But you will find a good many people find fault with me. You have no idea what the critics say sometimes. They declare that I am an imposter, a copyist; they say that I am—"

"Let them say what they like," Ruth laughed. "That is more jealousy, and anybody can criticize. To me you are the greatest novelist alive."

"There was only one answer to this, and Ruth broke away, declaring that she must go at once.

"But you will come this afternoon?" she said. "And you will make Lord Littimer like you. Some people say he is queer, but I call him an old darling."

"He will like me, he is bound to. I've got something, a present for him, that will render him my slave for life. Au revoir till the gloaming. (To be Continued.)"

### GREAT BRONZE IDOL.

Some two miles from Kamakura and about 20 from Yokohama, in Japan, on a terrace near the Temple, sits the most gigantic idol in the world. It is the brazen image of deity and it dates from the reign of the Emperor Shomu, who died A. D. 748. The dimensions of this idol are colossal. Its height from the base of the lotus flower upon which it sits to the top of its head is 63 feet.

# HEALTH

### HOME NURSING HINTS.

Don't go into a sick room when heated and don't sit between the patient and the fire, if there be one in the room, as the heat attracts any infectious vapor.

A sore throat should never be neglected, especially in the time of epidemics. A cleansing gargle is made by dissolving a heaped saltspoonful of salt and carbonate of soda, mixed in equal quantities, in half a tumblerful of water.

When a patient is on light diet it is well to remember that variety is pleasing. Even if the food must be the same, try to vary the cooking and arrangement of it. Let all food be well cooked and daintily served, and your patient will be more easily tempted to eat.

When the voice goes from the effects of a bad cold or much speaking, a pleasant and simple remedy is made by beating up the white of an egg and adding to it the juice of a lemon, and enough sugar to make it palatable. Take a spoonful from time to time. It will effect a speedy cure.

Give due attention to the ventilation of the room occupied by your patient, so that the air is constantly changing, at the same time having a suitable temperature and no draught. In order to avoid noise wrap each piece of coal in paper and use a piece of wood as a poker. All medicines and articles of food should be kept on a small table outside the bedroom door; milk and such-like goods should be covered over. Bedding should be well aired and changed frequently; sheets should be put on one side of the bed under the patient, and slowly drawn to the other side. Mattresses should, if possible, be used instead of feather beds, as they are more restful and less likely to become lumpy. Windows that are loose should be wedged, as a window rattling at night may disturb the patient; small wedges can be bought for this purpose.

WRINKLES ABOUT RESTING.

A professor of physical training gave some useful hints to ladies on the subject of rest. According to his precepts, attitude, if not every thing, is at least an important factor in securing needed rest and relaxation. Backache and weariness may be relieved by settling oneself comfortably on cushions and reclining with the feet elevated above the level of the head. The entire weight of the body must be supported by the cushions, and every muscle relaxed. The result is said to be very beneficial, five minutes' rest in this position being equivalent to an hour's repose in a more conventional posture. The pain and stiffness that come of working in constrained attitudes may be removed and the circulation greatly benefited by lying on cushions and clasping the hands below the knees. By sleeping on the left side with the arm thrust under the left knee, or vice versa, weakness in the waist may be relieved. This is an excellent position to adopt in cases of insomnia. Where it is a question of recuperating the strength by a few minutes' repose, the authority declares that resting on the back with the feet propped up against the wall will be found most effective.

### INFANTILE DIETARY.

To make prominent a few practical hints, the following are mentioned: Don't give acid milk. Don't use a tube in the nursing-bottle. Don't allow the bottle or nipple to be any other than aseptic. Don't fail to sterilize milk early and then cool rapidly by running cold water. Don't forget the necessity of pure air, cleanliness, and proper clothing. Don't forget that the infant is a creature of habit, and can be taught the proper frequency and amount of food and the time for sleep. Don't produce colic by allowing milk to flow too freely. Don't forget that infants are sensitive to starches.

TREATMENT OF MEASLES.

It is a common mistake to count measles as a trifling complaint that need not be noticed, and few people realize how many hundreds of young children die every year from it. If mothers would only remember that warmth is essential, and that every child with measles must be kept in bed, there would probably be few fatal cases. As it is, however, this simple precaution is neglected, and the bronchitis or inflammation of the lungs that supervenes is one of the commonest causes of death.

### FOR LEAN WOMEN.

The diet of the lean person should consist of those foods that tend to produce fat. They are chiefly sugar and starches. A good diet for the lean person would be an abundance of fat meat, butter, milk, cocoa, chocolate, bread, potatoes, beans, peas, cereals, especially oatmeal, tapioca, rice, and sago pudding, with sugar and cream, cake, sweets, honey, syrup, and sweet fruits. Avoid pickles, acid fruit, and eat very sparingly of green vegetables.