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MRS. E. D. E. N.

A NOVEL

SOUTHWORTH +++++++++++

vast possessions.

porter's lodge.

old Barons of Swinburne, from the time

of the Conquest down to the death of

They drove rapidly on, for yet

the chase, and suddenly came upon a

They passed under the lofty arch-

Swinburne Castle was of later date

of the letter H, and having towers at

Impenetrable woods bordering the open

chase; before it lay a smiling land-

scape, diversified by parterres of

flowers, groves of beautiful trees, and

a small, clear lake, shaded by over-

hanging willows, and adorned by a

from the line of Cassinava as his eyes

beauty, now lighted up as it was by the

transent that connected the two long

Two grooms, in waiting without, im-

onel Hastings, who alighted, followed

missed the post chaise, while the other

gray and white livery of Lady Ethe-

The apartment into which young Cas-

sinove had been shown was a pleasant.

commanded by the window.

hair, that was plainly parted over her

broad, expansive forehead, and swept

around the temples, and wound into

a rich and massive knot at the back of

the head. Her eyes were large, lum-

inous, dark-gray orbs, that seemed,

whenever the long veil of lashes was

lifted, to throw a light wherever they

thusiastic heart of Ferdinand Cassi-

nove was at once vivid, deep, and

strong-quick as sun-painting, perman-

ent as sculpture. He saw this goddess

of intellectual brow and stately step

open the window and advance into the

room, and as she approached him he

strange emotion of blended pain and

delight. He dreaded to move, yet, as

the needle turns to the magnet, he felt

himself turning from the reflected

image to face the original. He stood be-

fore that queenly form, and met those

large, luminous, dark eyes fixed upon

him in royal graciousness, as she said:

tary, I believe, sir. Pray sit down. You

will find the London papers on that

table." And, with a graceful bow, the

lady passed him, and seated herself on

a sofa at the extremity of the room,

took up a portfolio, and was soon deep-

he had returned her curtsey. Ferdin-

and Cassinove remained motionless

where she had left him. But ten minu-

tes had elapsed since she had glided

in among the flowers, and passed him

like a vision seen in some beautiful

dream. But ten minutes, and life, the

world, himself, were all changed for

Ferdinand Cassinove. He felt, from

that moment, that his fate must take

its character for good or evil from the

He had heard that Lady Etheridge

had a young friend, Miss Dornton, stay-

ing with her, to act as her first atten-

dant at the approaching marriage.

This, then, was Miss Dornton. And

who was Ferdinand Cassinove, that he

dared to occupy his thoughts with Miss

Dornton? A young man of obscure ori-

gin, left to the benevolent guardianship

of Colonel Hastings, who had defraved

tric spark of love.

Who was she? What was she?

After the profound bow with which

ly engaged with its contents.

"You are Colonel Hastings's secre-

felt his whole frame thrill with

The impression made upon the en-

glanced.

"Show me into the library, Williams,

They draw up before the central

flock of graceful white awans.

Florious sun of Juna

way, and entered upon the beautiful

Author of "Self-Raised," "The Deserted Wife," "The Bride's Fate," "Retribution," "Ishmael," "The Wife's Victory," Etc., Etc.

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CHAPTER L

It was the first year of the nineteenth century-ere yet steamships, five years before, leaving his only railways, gaslight, insurance compan- daughter, Laura, sole heiress of all his ies, telegraphic wires, and detective policemen had expelled nearly all possibility of vicissitude, peril and ad- another mile, along the boundary of venture from civilized society.

It was while clumsy sailing vessels thicket of trees, from the midst of were the only means of ocean travel, which frowned the ruins of the ancient and heavy stagecoaches lumbered keep, its solid masonry now covered slowly along every public road in the thickly with ivy. Young Cassinove, who country; it was while footpads still felt a deep interest in all these scenes. lurked in the shadows of the city would have paused to contemplate this streets, to start forth upon the belated venerable ruin, but again the impapedestrian, and highwaymen, under the tience of his employer urged the posveil of night, sprang out to commit tillion to greater speed, and they their lawless depredations upon the un- drove hurriedly past. A few yards farguarded traveler; while the spirit of ther on they reached the south gate romance hovered around old buildings, of the park, guarded by the ancient and superstition lingered in secluded neighborhoods, that the strange events of our story transpired.

It was early in the morning of a love- grounds that lay more immediately ly day in June that a rather large around the castle. group of idlers gathered in front of the Etheridge Arms, a quaint old tavern than the ancient keep, the ruins of in the ancient little town of Swinburne, which they had just passed, and from England. the four extremities.

They were standing within the arched gateway, or leaning against the solld masonry of the side walls, that looked strong enough and old enough to have been those of some ancient keep, and which, in fact, had done good service as defenses in the olden time when might made right, and every man's house was Indeed eastia.

usual importance was expected to came all

he keeping her?" inquired Broding, the village smith, as he returned, disappainted, from one of these surveys. "What do'es think; wull the brild mediately came forward to attend Colgroom be doon for sure?" he asked, turning to an ostler, who had left the by his secretary. One of the grooms disstable yard for the same purpose. "Wull the young squair be doon? Of knocked at the door, which was imme-

course he wull! Dunnot he send down | diately opened by a footman in the his groom to speak rooms in the house, orders to have fires kindled? Why, ridge, of Swinburne. the young squoir wull never be at such a time," replied the ostlar. | and let her ladyship know that I await good job if un never coom at all. her convenience. Cassinove, my good lookes of you cooming to marry fellow, you can stay here, I suppose, lady, and lord it over our castle. | until you are wanted," said Colonel en wur it ever known that a Lord | Hastings, opening a door on his right heridge, of Swinburne, married wi' to admit the young secretary into a communer? But we've ay heard tell sitting-room, and then going on, atat a house is done fur when it falls | tended by the footman, to the library. the distaff," said an old laborer, om Swinburne Chase. "I'll tell'ee all what and about it. Old | cheerful morning room, simply but ele-

astings, the feyther o' this young gantly furnished. The great front winnan, was his late ludship's friend, and dow, reaching from ceiling to floor, and tere left guardeen by his late lud- from side to side, commanded an exhip's will to this young lady. Well, old | tensive view of the lawn, with its fastings was a knowing 'un, and made groves of trees, its shaded lake, and he match. There's where it is; and so its parterres of flowers. A rosery outhey're to be married to-morrow." "Holgh! Harken! Coome along wi' I: ere's the coach," suddenly interrupted he smith, starting from the archway this room was a spacious mirror, that into the street, just as the horn was filled up all that part of the wall, and heard signaling the approach of the reflected the whole of the landscape

Bristol coach, that presently rumbled

lown the street, and drew up with reat noise before the tavern gate. First came from the interior of the scape, suddenly among the roses toach an elderly gentleman, whose glided a purple-draped female figure, tall, spare and stooping figure was that immediately riveted his attention. clothed in a suit of clerical black, and It was a woman in the earliest bloom whose pale, thin, long face was sur- of youth. Her form was above the merounded by hair and whiskers prema- dium height, and well rounded. Her, turely gray. He was closely attended head was finely formed, and covered by a young man, whose Roman fea- with a profusion of jet-black, glittering tures, olive complexion, jet-black hair, and deep, dark eyes, bespoke him of the Celtic race, while his plain dress and subordinate position could not disand manner. In this last he was such

guise the grace and dignity of his air a contrast to his employer that he might have been taken for a prince of the blood, attended by an old gentleman in waiting. "I say, Broding, yon's old Hastings

and his secretary. I've seen un before doon here," said the old laborer, addressing the smith, as these two travelers issued from the coach, and passed before the bowing and smirking host into the house. Next came forth a young gentleman,

whose handsome person and haughty manner at once attracted general attention. His form was tall and finely proportioned, crowned by a haughty head and face, with high, aquiline features, fair and fresh complexion, light blue eyes, and very light flaxen hair. His expression of countenance, keeping with his whole manner, was stern almost to repellent severity. Great beauty of person, with great dignity of manner, forms a combination very attractive to most young women, and perhaps it was this that fascinated the young heiress of Swinburne Castle, for this was Albert Hastings. bridegroom-elect. He was followed into the house by his valet bearing his dressing-case. Colonel Hastings was immediately

shown into his private parlor, where he was soon joined by his son. The landlord stood bowing at the door, and waiting for orders. "Breakfast, immediately, and

post chaise at the door in half hour," was the brief order of Colonel Hastings.

"Yes, your honor. What would your will of that royal-looking woman. honor like for breakfast?"

"Anything that is at hand, only be The landlord bowed and disappear-

ed, and was soon succeeded by the head waiter, who came in and laid the cloth and spread upon the board a substantial breakfast, to which the hungry travelers did ample justice. They had scarcely finished the meal

before the post chaise was announced. The elder Hastings arose, saying: etiquette does not admit of your wait- into his family as his private secretary. Lady Etheridge of Swinburne. It caning upon your belle maitresse to-day, Yet all of Italy's genius, passion, and not be helped. I cannot pause for lady's

at twelve."

and with this abrupt leave-taking, the elder Hastings, attended by his sec- perhaps, of fortune! Oh, if she were William Lovel, nor must Rose Elmer retary, Cassinove, left the house, and not already wooed and won! Give him know Lady Etheridge and Albert Hasentered the post chaise to drive to time and under the inspiration of his tings. And now to persuade Rose to go Swinburne Castle.

A drive of more than a mile brought tinction, a glorious name, and lay them and my lady-bride are to spend our them to Swinburne park church, an at her feet. If this passion was sudden honeymoon."

ancient, ivy-covered, Gothic edifice, as it was ardent, remember that Fercoeval with the castle itself, and, like dinand Cassinove was of the Celtic his hat and strolled out into the street. story, and in song. There rested the re-

In the midst of the pleasing pain of this love-dream the door opened, and the gray-haired servant whom Ferdihad seen in the hall entered softly, and stepping across the room to where the lady sat, and speaking in the low, subdued tone in which royal personages are addressed, said: "My lady, Colonel Hastings' respects, and he awaits your ladyship in the

"Very well, William; go and say to Colonel Hastings that I will attend

him immediately," answered the lady, queenly woman, then, was Laura, Baroness Etheridge of Swin-Forever and forever unattainable by him! Oh, despair! His castle in the air tumbled all about him, and burfed all his hopes and aspirations in mains, and there lay the effigies of the its fall. While still stunned by the dis-

approached him and said: the last Lord Etheridge, who had died "You, also, sir, are wanted," and left the room to precede his lady into the

> Lady Etheridge passed on with her stately step and gracious smile, and young Cassinove followed like a man in a state of painful somnambulency. They crossed the great hall to the library, which was situated on the same floor. It was a great, antique apartment, richly furnished, and stored with the literature of all lands and ages, and adorned with the portraits of such of the old barons of Swinburne as had been distinguished in the councils or the battles of their nation. At a writing-table near the centre sat Colonel Hastings, who arose with the stately courtesy of the olden time, and set a chair for his ward.

Lady Etheridge, after greeting her guardian cordially, took the indicated

The old servant retired. Ferdinand Cassinove withdrew to distant Gothic window of stained glass, and stood apparently studying its scriptural subjects, but really, senses preternaturally sharpened by the excitement of his heart and brain, compelled to hear and see all that

passed at that central table. There they sat, the guardian and his ward, in close discussion. The guardlan, with his tall, spare figure, and thin, pale face, in marked contrast with his solemn suit of black, sat examining a document that lay before him, Lady Etheridge, in the purple satin robe that so well became her supers figure, sat opposite, with her arm carelessly resting upon the table, and her fine face raised, with an expression of joy irradiating her coun-

"But my dear Laura," said Colonel Hastings, with a look compounded of deasure and perplexity, "this noble iberality, I must say, places us in a very delicate position. I am your guardian; your intended husband is my son. The calumnious world already charges me with having made the match beween my son and my wealthy ward. And now, Lady Etheridge, should you persist in your generous confidence, and execute the deed of gift of this whole magnificent estate to your intended husband; and he should accept it, what, then, would the world say?"

"Just what it likes, my dear guardian. I am of age and have the right to do what I please with my own. I please to bestow it all, not only in effect, but in reality, upon my husband," she replied, with a beaming smile. "But, Lady Etheridge, I do not know

that you, the last baroness of the ancient house of Swinburne, have the right to transfer the Castle of Swinburne, with its vast dependence, to an "An alien! Do you call my husband

an alien?" "He is not of your blood."

side the window adorned the frame, without obstructing the view of this "He is more. He is of my heart, and grand picture. At the opposite end of soul, and spirit, as I am of his. Oh, Colonel Hastings! there can be no question of mine and thine between me and Albert. The deed of gift that transfers all my possessions to my fu-While Cassinove stood before the ture husband is made out; let it be mirror, enjoying the reflected landexecuted. He shall then never be jealous of his wife's riches, for she will come to him as poor as a cottage girl." exclaimed Lady Etheridge, with a pure devotion of love flushing her cheek and lighting her eyes.

"Lady Etheridge, are you resolved upon this transfer? "Immutably."

"Then you must have your will. Cassinove, come hither, if you please. Your signature is wanted, as witness to a

Young Cassinove started. He had heard all that had passed; thinkingfeeling-Oh, Heavens! how this woman can love-this woman, whom could worship, nay, whom I do and shall worship as the guiding star of my life, as long as I shall live. Oh, that the man who is blessed with her love may be worthy of her! And, oh, that I had the old Pagan privilege of opening the gates of life, and escaping its tortures! He obeyed Colonel Hastings summons, and went up to the table where he was presented to Lady Ethe-

"My secretary, Mr. Cassinove, your "I have seen Mr. Cassinove before, said the lady, kindly holding out her

He parely touched the white hand as he bent before her. His own turned "Now, then, Lady Etheridge,"

claimed Colonel Hastings, spreading out the document before her. And the business of signing and witnessing the deed was completed.

we must precede them by a few hours. CHAPTER II.

Colonel Hastings had scarcely left the room ere Mr. Albert Hastings arose, stretched himself with a weary yawn, and began to pace thoughtfully up and down the floor, murmuring: "Men think me a very fortunate and happy man; and, doubtless, an unusual number of good gifts have been showered upon me by the favor of the blind goddess-not the least among them would be esteemed the hand of this wealthy young baroness, my bride expectant. Well, we cannot have everything we want in this world, else sweet Rose Elmer only should be the wife of Albert Hastings. Poor girl! she little dreams that the man who has wooed her, under the name of William poetry smoldered in the heart of the right, or maiden's honor. Here, then, or seeing her until you meet her at the young secretary, and these were kin- for a divided life; my hand to the lady church. But au revoir until to-morrow dled into a sudden blaze by the electof Swinburne my heart to the lovely cottage girl; only Lady Etheridge Miss Dornton! a lady of rank, and, must never know of Rose Elmer and

the castle, celebrated in history, in race. Yes: he would win the world, and Walking in an opposite direction to tranging her, he could not tell. He per

that taken by Colonel Hastings in his drive to Swinburne Castle, Albert Has-tings soon reached a cross-country road, which he pursued for about two miles. Then, turning to the left, he enred a narrow, shady lane, that led im to a small, secluded cottage, near-hidden from sight amid climbing vines, clustering shrubs and overhanging trees. Taking a key from his pocket, he unlocked the little green wood en gate, and passing between tall,

flowering shrubs, he stepped under the

small key, opened the cottage door

vine-shaded porch, and applying

and entered at once upon the

large room the cottage could boast. This lonely cottage had been rented and furnished by Albert Hastings as a trysting place for his love. The whole air of the room was couleur de rose He called it "The Bower of Roses." It was, indeed, the bower of one peerless rose. Here he had been accustomed covery he had made, the old servant during his visits to the neighborhood of his affianced bride, to meet the Rose of his secret thoughts. But here, also, let it be clearly understood, he had re spected the honor of the humble maiden-not upon any good principle, perhaps; but loving her with all the power of his selfish heart, and resolved upon making her his own forever, he abstained from any freedom that might alarm her delicacy, and, perhaps, estrange her heart.

> Albert Hastings, the only son of Colonel Hastings, of Hastings Hall Devon, and of Portman Square, Londan, had been endowed by nature with many other good gifts besides his preeminently handsome and princely person. He had a good head, and originally a good heart; but he had been spoil ed from his youth up, in being led to believe that the whole world, and all within it, had been created for his own private use—or abuse, if he pleased. And if this selfish creed were not now fully credited, it was, at least,

> -a thing that cannot often be said of Albert Hastings had always been designed by his father to be the husband of the wealthy young baroness, his ward. The crafty old man had taken care not to bring the young people together in any manner during their childhood, lest they should grow up as brother and sister, without thought of a dearer relationship. He had content ed himself with secluding the young pany. He had fixed her permanent esidence in the deep retirement of windurne Castle, where she remain: ed, year after year, under the care of a distant female relative, Mrs. Mont-

somery, the widow of a clergyman.

There she was attended by various deeply-learned masters and highly-accomplished mistresses, all very discreet and alderly, who had been sent down by Colonel Hastings to carry on her eduaction. At the age of eighteen she first met Albert Hastings. It had een planned that she should spend a year in making the tour of the Continent, in company with her guardian and his son, whose travels were delayed for this purpose. It was but a few days before the intended departure, while the heart of the young heiress was elated with the prospect of seeing foreign countries, that Albert Hastings was introduced to her. His handsome person, dignified presence, and fascinating manners, made some impression upon the imagination of the secluded young baroness. During their subsequent travels over the Continent, his well-cultivated mind, various accomplishments, and brilliant conversational powers so deepened this impression that the youthful Lady Etheridge thought she had met the man of men, the only one in the world to whom it was possible to give her own heart, and when the expected avowal of love and offer of marriage came. Laura Etheridge trembled at the thought of a happiness too rich for her merits-almost too perfect for this world. Albert Hastings was deeply enamored of the Baroness Etheridge

They returned home to prepare for the marriage, which was to take place at Swinburne Castle. The Hastings fixed their residence at their town house, but frequently came

of Swinburne and her vast posses-

sions; but apart from those, how much

did he really care for the young girl,

down to Swinburne, the guardian to see his ward, the young gentleman to visit his bride-elect. It was during one of these visits to the neighborhood, while he was staying at the Etheridge Arms, that Albert Hastings first saw Rose Elmer. Le-

vere, his valet, had sent his master's linen to a laundress, and it had been brought home by Rose. She was a fair and delicate beauty

small and exquisitely formed, with regular features and a snowy complexion, faintly tinted with a roseate bloom upon the rounded cheeks and plump

little lips, and a profusion of pale, golden hair parted and waved off in rippling tresses from a forehead of in fantine whiteness and smoothness. Her beauty fascinated Albert Hastings. He secretly discovered her

dwelling-a poor cottage, in a narrow unsightly street of the village-and he made an excuse to call there and settle his laundress' bill. This was the commencement of their acquaintance. Afterward he contrived frequently to meet Rose in her daily errands through the village, and, when no eye was near to spy his motions, he would join her in her walks.

Through the help of a confidentia servant and a city agent, he hired and furnished that obscure cottage in the Colonel Hastings and his secretary wood, and one day, meeting Rose, he then took leave, and left the castle to invited her for a walk, and conducted return to the Etheridge Arms, whither her to the cottage to give her a sur prise and to watch its effect. As h ushered Rose into the pretty room, fit ted up with all the elegance of a lady's boudoir, she made an exclamation of intense astonishment and pleasure The rural cottage in its thicket roses, flowering shrubs and trees, and the pretty room, with its gems of art and literature, affected her with many delightful emotions. The novelty pleased her unaccustomed eyes; the beauty charmed her poetic soul; and the thought that all this had been prepared by William Lovel, and for her, touched her heart with profound grati-

> "And this is your home?" she said turning her clear eyes, beaming with innocent joy, upon his face. "This is my home, sweet Rose, an

yours, when you consent to share it the expenses of his education at school Lovel, is really Albert Hastings, the with me," he answered, with a grave "Albert, my boy, I am sorry that and college, and afterward taken him envied bridegroom of the high-born tenderness that was natural to him "Mr. Lovel, I am too lowly born, too humble, and too ignorant to be your wife. Would it were otherwise, and I

were more worthy of the station that you offer me," she murmured, in an almost inaudible voice. He suddenly dropped her hand and walked to the window. He had not meant anything like this. Yet the inlove for her, he would win wealth, dis- before me into Wales, where myself nocent village girl had naturally mis-

taken his declaration of love for a proposal of marriage. How to deceive her without shocking her; how to explain, without esived that the winning of this girl to

"Sweet love, I did not mean to hurry and distress you. Since you feel a desire for a wider range of knowledge, though I think you altogether lovely as you are, I myself will become your teacher, It shall be my delightful task to open to your mind the treasures of literature and art, and to direct your reading. This lovely spot shall be our study, and you shall meet me here daily, while I remain in the neighborhood. Will you do this, sweet Rose?"

"To educate myself to be more worthy of you? Oh, yes, Mr. Lovel. You almost distress me with kindness. But I have always heard that the noble and good draw their highest happiness from deeds of beneficence. How happy then, must you be! Yes, Mr. Lovel, will come," she murmured, in low and gentle tones, blushing at her own temerity in saying so much. And thus it was arranged. And daily,

while he continued in the neighborhood, they met at the cottage in the wood. Rose Elmer proved an apt scholar. She had already the solid foundation of a good common education. Albert Hastings introduced her to the world of poetry, belles lettres, and art. When he left the neighborhood he had left with her a duplicate key of the cottage, that she might admit herself when she pleased, only exacting from her that she should keep her visits thither, as she had kept their meet-

Before coming down on his last visit, Mr. Hastings had written her a note. signed, as usual, "William Lovel," and appointed a meeting with her at the

It would be tedious to repeat all the arguments he used to reconcile her to a clandestine marriage. It is enough to thoroughly carried out in his practice say that he was a man of society quence that might have swayed councils of a nation, to say nothing o the mind of a young girl. He was, besides, handsome: fascinating, and in ove; and she was a simple village girl, loving, esteeming and confiding in him with her whole heart. He found the task easier than he could lebed. Hers was the perfect leve which easteth out fear," that "thinketh no evil;" Indeed, she advanced but one ob section to the secret marriage her duty to her mother. But this very arsument he immediately selzed, used on his own side.

Her "duty to her mather," he said "was to provide for her support in her old age. Her marriage with himself would effectually do this.

Then she pleaded hard mother should be at once admitted into their confidence. Tenderly, but ab: stinately, he refused this; telling her that their secret would not be safe in the keeping of a sick and nervous woman, whose reason, from all that he could hear of her, was evidently tottering; and that if that secret should be discovered, his proud uncle would not only disinherit him and withdraw his powerful protection from him, but would even turn his political influence against him. Then Rose ceased to resist, only stipulating that after their marriage she should still remain with her mother, who needed her services, until Mr. Lovel should be ready to acknowledge her as his wife and take both herself and parent to his own

This was not all that Mr. Hastings wished, but neither logic nor eloquence could convince or persuade Rose Elmer to desert her ailing mother; and upon no other condition than that of being allowed to remain with her would she consent to the secret marriage. And to this condition Mr. Hastings at last agreed, especially as there were very serious difficulties attending his favorite project of sending her into Wales, where he and his lofty but unloved bride were going to spend their honeymoon. And, finally, he obtained a promise from Rose that she would meet him at the cottage that same night, where, by a previous arrangement, his confidential servant, in attendance to perform the marriage ing to the woman's side. turn to her mother, to remain during have wanted you."

the few weeks of his absence in Wales whither, he said, important business forced him. This agreed upon, they took leave of each other for a few hours, Mr. Hastings saying in parting: "Farewell for the last time, Rose Elmer: when next we part I shall say, 'Farewell, Rose Lovel, my own sweet

wife!"" They returned to the village by different routes. Mr. Hastings went to his inn, and summoned his confidential servant to his presence. And Rose Elhand upon her heart, dropped her head mer, full of hope and joy, turned down the street leading to her mother's cot-

It was a narrow, dusty, unsightly lit tle street. There was no rural freshness or picturesque beauty about it The little old stone cottages on each side, and the few sickly-looking plants that stood in the windows, were covered with the hard, white dust that every breath of wind and every passing

vehicle raised in clouds. About half-way down the length of this street stood a row of low, stone cottages, covered, like everything else, with a suffocating dust of purverized limestone. Nothing could be drier or more depressing than the looks these cottages. Not a green thing grew near them, not a foot of ground intervened between them and the dusty treet; the doors opened immediately upon the sidewalk, and not a bit of pas sage protected the privacy of dwellers. Any intruder could step at once from the street into the keeping-

It was before one of the most forlornooking of these cottages that Rose Elmer paused, lifted the latch, and enered at once upon a large, comfortlessooking room, whose scanty furniture had been already covered with dust in her absence. A coarse carpet covered the floor-a cheap muslin veiled the only window. A tent bedstead, with faded curtains, stood in the farthest corner. Opposite this stood a mangle another corner was filled up with a staircase, having a closet under it, and the fourth corner was adorned with a board, through the glass doors of which a little store of earthenware shone. There was a smoldering fire in the grate, and beside this fire, in an old armchair, sat a woman, whom no one would have passed without a second look. She was a woman of comng presence. Her form was to and must have once been finely rounded; but now it was worn thin, almost to skeleton meagreness. Her features were nobly chiseled, and might once have been grandly beautiful, but now they were sunken and emaciated as those of death. Under her broad and prominent forehead and heavy, dark eyebrows shone a pair of large, darkgray eyes, that burned flercely with the fires of fever or of frenzy. Her jet-black hair, slightly streaked with silver, was half covered with a red handkerchief,

tied beneath her chin, and partly fallen

in elf-locks down one side of her face.

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A rusty black gown and shawl comple-As the door opened, admitting Rose, she turned quickly in her chair, fixing her eyes with a look of fierce inquiry

"How are you now, mother, dear? I hope you feel in better spirits?" said disguised as a clergyman, was to be Rose, laying off her bonnet and comceremony, after which, Rose should 1e- "Better. Where have you been? I

upon the intruder.

"I have been—taking a walk through the woods, dear mother; and see, here are some wild strawberries I picked for you on my return. Will you eat them?" said Rose, offering her little "No: I want none of them. You care

ittle for me." "Mother, don't say that. You do not know how much I love you." "Hush, girl, you have little cause-

And the woman suddenly struck her

upon her breast, and seemed convulsed by some great agony. Her features worked frightfully; her frame shud-'Mother! mother! what is the mater?" exclaimed Rose throwing her

rms around the woman in great "It is-past," gasped the woman. eathing with great difficulty.

What was it, dear?" "A spasm. It is gone." Oh, mother, will it return?" "Nay, you must run somewhere else!

To-morrow, Laura—Lady Etheridge, of Swinburne, weds with Albert Hastings, of Hastings Hall. It is so, is it not?" "Surely, dear mother, the village is full of the wedding, and talks of nothing else. The village children have been employed all day in bearing flowers to decorate the castle church (Continued on Page Three)

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