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- - JOHN MARCH - -

(AUTHOR OF "A CHILD OF MANY PRAYERS," ETC.).

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CHAPTER XIV. Jack Hunter

Doctor Hunter entered briskly, the ANYONE ONE NEEDING smooth, healthy floridness of his face heightened by the sharp outer air. He turned with professional precision to pairs, Cement Curbing or see if he had snacked the door securely, and looked somewhat excited, as if he had something of importance

"I daresay you are surprised, Fleming, to see me here to-night, but-George Whitmore hello-what's the matter? Have I come at an awkward time, or is there

> Agnes, tired with her journey and overwrought with emotion, burst into a vehement flood of tears. He looked from her to the Squire, who with his broad, powerful shoulders against the high mantelshelf, and his hands deep in his trousers' pockets, was colorless, despite his tanned skin.

"If you don't want me, just tell me to go," he said, looking at Felix. don't much relish poking my nose into people's private domestic squabbles, discussions, or differences. Look here, I'll come around in the morning-"

"Don't go, doctor; I want you," Agnes exclaimed, springing to his side and clasping her hands around his arm. "Doctor Hunter, will you do me a favor? Will you go into the shrubbery and see if Mr. Farley is there?"

"Of course I will," he said, cheerfully, laying a warm soothing hand over the trembling ones on his arm, "I'm looking for him myself; he's the very identical party I want. Why should he be in your shrubbery, though?" he added, somewhat amused.

"I horse-whipped him about twenty minutes back," Felix interposed, laughing and drawing himself to his full height, "and left him there, so Agnes concluded he is going to spend the night cold and stark under the stars." "Good Heavens, Felix! You don't

mean to may you horsewhipped that delicate, highly-strung, sensitive boy? pect to find him much the worse to-By Jove! I wouldn't like to be in morrow." your grip, with your whip hand over! She smiled and wiped the tears

or his life."

or massacred everyone in the neigh- me.'

door and holding it open.

"You have no objection, have you, the shrubbery." Felix, to my going to see if Farley is there? I'm hunting for him on my own account.'

"Not in the least," he said, with a fine show of indifference. "I shall be in the keeping-room, Hunter; I'll see you before you go," and then he slam-

Doctor Hunter asked, watching her ancestors for generations back. What again you are old, or make disrespectchair beside the fire.

"Yes." she responded gratefully; "will you take some brandy with you?" "No," he said, tapping his coat pocket, "I keep a flask here in case of emergency," and going up to the French window, he pulled up the blind, unfastened it, ran down the flight of steps into the garden, and round to the shrubbery that way.

He walked in the direction of the summer-house, and in a streak of moonlight across the pathway he saw something glitter, stooped, and picked up a gold collar-stud; and then at a ittle distance another. He put them in his waistcoat pocket and looked carefully round for a trace of the it cured thousands after other doctors owner. Presently his travelling eyes halted at a long dark object near the hedge, and with a smothered exclamation he strode across and knelt own by Pr | Farley's side.

"Hello, my lad!" he said, unscrewing the flash, "can you get up? You've been lying here pretty nearly half an hour." Without staying for an answor, he listed his head and poured some brandy between his lips, and while he wanted for the spirit to take the desired effect, he struck a match and lighted a tiny candle in a nickelplated holder, and took a good look at Paul's ghastly face.

"Upon my word, it's too bad!" he muttered, grawing the tips of his fingers along the white wales that striped his cheek and neck. "I shall call Master Felix to account for this." Paul stirred and opened his eyes,

and the dector gave him another dose of brandy. "Can you get on to your feet with my help, Farley?" he asked. "I want

you off the ground, my lad; you've lain here long enough.' Paul's eyes stared about him in a dazed unnatural way, as if the place were strange to him, then suddenly

the doctor full in the chest.

me for our friend Felix, eh? You anything." know me, don't you, Farley?" "Yes," he answered, gazing at him. "You are Doctor Hunter. I beg your pardon."

"Never mind about begging my pardon; just scramble to your feet, there's a good fellow. Come," he added, winding his arm around him. "Now, then, up you get," and in half a second he had him standing and leaning against the trunk of a horsechestnut tree. "How do v

"giddy? You wouldn't like to go indoors and lie down for a bit?"

Paul shook his head and his lips quivered ominously. He swallowed cit; you have put the matter quite something apparently very big, something that seemed to pass through the gullet with the greatest difficulty, ing and accepting your explanation." and said in a voice that had the sound of tears in it, "I shall never go there again; there is nothing between us now but the frayed-out ends of a broken friendship and a sense of injustice, insult and injury."

"Pshaw!" the doctor said, snapping his fingers, "I don't know what the dispute is about, but I do know that if Felix has been mistaken, and acted under a false impression, he won't be at all backward in acknowledging himself in the wrong."

"A man must believe what he sees | count." with his own eyes; he can't be persuaded out of that," Paul rejoined dejectedly.

home, drink a pint of warm milk. try to like me?" You don't need any more alcoholtake a hot bath, go to bed, and stay mistakable earnestness. there till I've seen you in the morning. Come," he said, taking his arm, ed, bending towards her, his heart "my trap is driving up and down the beating like a girl's. turnpike. Dick can drive you home "Yes, quite," she said, sliding to her and come back for me." He escorted knees beside him. "I would like to him to the dog-cart, helped him in. marry you. I am almost sure that I gave a few directions, and returned love you." to the parlor by the way he had He opened his arms, and she crept egressed a short while before.

"Well, Miss Agnes," he said, cheer his neck. ily, bringing a chair opposite to her | "I am old enough to be your father," in an unconscious habitual profes- cheek. sional way, "do you mind having me on your hands half an hour? I've sent Mr. Farley home in my dog-cart."

"He was there, then?" she said, her n't take care of myself." color fading a little. "Is he much

"Nothing to speak of," he said,

from her eyelashes.

what's more, if he crosses my path said, "so if you prefer to keep this He wouldn't have cut up rough like again I'll break every bone in his matter to yourself, you hold on to it this if the affection had not been body; I'll thrash him within an inch | tight, little woman. At the same time, | deeply rooted and his heart very much "In the name of fortune, what has help you to draw a load of any sort of looks upon this affair in the light you he done? Murdered your best friends, trouble, don't you scruple to saddle say he does, it must have been a blow

"I've no wish to make the cause you," she said, without a trace of spiring together to deceive him. public; I'm not at all proud of the embarrassment, "because Felix show- know our Felix; I know his heart and motive which prompted the castiga- ed me your letter, you know; it's only conscience are as tender as a wotion, but perhaps Agnes is not quite right you should understand the kind man's, but just now he feels like a so squeamish. I'll leave the explana- of a girl I am. The reason why Felix man who has been wounded in the tion to her," he said, walking to the thrashed Mr. Farley was, he saw him kiss me in the old summer-house in

"Indeed!" he said, looking into the fire very seriously, "and Felix thought such condiga punishment might herp "I'll see him before I go, and put matto cure him of further presumption?" ters as plain and as straight as I can. "He was very angry, in a fearful By the way, Agnes, what do you think rage. I don't know what he has he will say to this May and December threatened as with. I know he feels engagement?" "You would like me to go at once?" as if I had disgraced him and all our "I won't marry you if I hear you say disturbed face as he led her to the low | do you think of our behavior, Dr. Hun-

> ceeding on Mr. Farley's part to offer You looked fresh and rosy, and quite you kisses, and on yours to accept boyish when you came in to-night, and them, if you are both of the same Felix looked old and cross and horsentiment and shade of opinion. Why | rid. should Felix object to a match between young people?"

"Now, that's a rock I'm afraid you'll strike against and go to pieces on," she said, with a ghost of a smile, moving her chair a trifle closer to his and putting a hand on his knee. "There's no question of sentiment, love, engagement, or marriage between us; we like each other immensely, we are good friends and comrades; nothing more, and never will be. Mr. Farley would tell you the same if you asked him."

"Why did you meet him in the summer-house?" he asked, smiling. "Why, because he is in a fearful

muddle," she said eagerly. "A certain lady in the neighborhood says he has proposed to her, and he says he has not, and doesn't want to be bothered with any of the women in the place. His chief aim and object in life now is to get free of her, so he thought he would tell the tale to me before he mentioned it to Felix, because he said, sometimes a woman's wit is keener and sharper than a man's."

"Well, and you were so kind and sympathetic that he took you in his arms and kissed you, is that it?"

"Yes, he did that," she acknowledged, looking down, a little confused, "but I hadn't helped him much because Felix arrived before he had commenced his tragic story."

To her astonished delight he leaned back in his chair and gave vent to a spontaneous burst of laughter. "Poor fellow, poor Farley," said the

doctor, wiping his eyes; "and dear old Felix didn't see the humorous side of the situation?"

"No; don't you see, Mr. Farley ha catching sight of the man beside him, | told Felix ever so many times he did he threw up his arms in anticipation not mean to marry, and has talked of warding off more blows, and struck against marriage and all that, so Felix thought we were deceiving him; that "Steady, my man!" he said, with Mr. Farley was making secret love to smiling geniality, "you are mistaking | me, and all the time he did not mean

> "So there is absolutely nothing between you young people, except the kissing-how do you account for that?" he asked, looking steadily into her large truthful eyes.

> "I can't account for it," Agnes said, meeting the look without flinching, without the quiver of an eyelid. "I wish I could; at any rate I'll try. It was like this: Mr. Farley came up here after a good dinner, all warm, comfortable, and happy, and I met him after a long, cold journey. My feet

were numb and my fingers frozen, and he took my hands in his warm ones and tried to get some circulation into them. Felix was close by in the stables, and we were both excited by the feeling that he might come upon us at any moment; excited by a sense of danger, by a secret lonely meeting at night with the moon shining and the fresh wind blowing through the crackling leaves about us; and suddenly turning silly and bold, I said he grew better looking every day; and being impulsive, easily moved, and flattered, he caught me in his arms and kissed me-and-; Dr. Hunter, I wouldn't mind taking my oath that he never meant an atom of harm, or that there was a single wrong thought in his head, any more than if it had been Felix himself. Can you understanddo you believe me?"

"I think you have been most expliclearly and aptly, Miss Agnes, and I have no hesitation whatever in believ-

"Felix wouldn't," she said, the tears coming into her eyes. "I daresay not, but there's a whole world of difference between us. Fe-

lix is your brother, and I, Agnes, your -lover!" "Then you don't mind about Mr.

Farley?" "Not a bit," he said, taking the little nervous hand fluttering on his knee into a warm, safe, substantial clasp; "he's left your heart for me to try and win, and the rest, my dear, don't

"You are very kind," she said, nervously, trying to laugh.

"Am I?" he asked pleasantly. "Well, don't try to cram to-morrow's | wonder whether you'll be kind to me, troubles in along with to-day's. Go and, in spite of my being an old fogey,

"I do like you," she said with un-"Enough to marry me?" he whisper-

close to him and laid her face against

and sitting down in close proximity, he said, rubbing his chin on her soft "All the better," she said, laughing.

> "I want somebody old enough to take proper care of me; Felix said I could-"Felix hasn't been very polite of

"Yes, he has, until this evening. guardedly, "he was a bit faint, but he's never saw him so enraged before, and gone home pretty right, and I don't ex- the extraordinary part is, he professed

and seemed to be so attached to Mr.

Farley." "So he is, darling. Nothing much escapes the professional eye, and "I thrashed him, my dear sir, and, "I am not an inquisitive man," he know he is mad, simply mad on Farley if you fancy an old horse like me can engaged. You see, Agnes, if Felix to him to discover that the two people "I don't know, but I think I'll tell he loves best in the world were con-

house of his friends." "Yes, and the worst of it is he'll persist in thinking so," she said wearily.

"No, he won't," he said, cheerfully.

ful allusions to your age," she said, with a charming pout. "It's too ab-"I think it was a very natural pro- surd; you look younger than Felix.

> "So that's how you flattered Farley?" he asked, looking askant at her. "Of course I may take a leaf out of his book and reward you for the delicate compliment?" "Oh, no," she said, laughing and col-

a silly boy, Dr. Hunter' "My name is Jack," he said gravely; "but perhaps you didn't know,"

on the lips. She blushed scarlet and looked so wince. abashed that he felt almost inclined to apologize. But instead he buttoned his coat and fidgetted round the room

until she had in some degree recovered from her bashful surprise. "Agnes," he said, putting his arm

around her, "have you any choice about the ring?" "Not any, she said, looking into the

fire; "I shall be satisfied with whatever you choose." "Have you any choice about the courting; would you rather not be kissed?"

She looked up into his love-lit eyes, and saw there the devotion of his heart in all its depth and grandeur. The effect was as a lightning touch; she saw heaven in a glance. The sweet idolatry enslaved her, and raising her arms swiftly she clasped them around his neck, draw his head down to hers, and kissed him.

"That's my answer," she whispered, glad smiles and truant tears chasing each other in her eyes. "I love you, you understand, Jack; I love you."

He saw the love in its budding beauty; he felt the magic of its smile; his heart shouted with joyous victory, and he breathed an inward thanksgiving for his happy, hallowed lot, as he went softly out from the dim old parlor and sought Felix in the keeping-room.

The Squire was seated in a roomy leather chair, his feet on the steel rim of the stove, his pipe in his mouth,

"I expect you thought I was gone, he said, addressing the back of Felix's head, "but I've been waiting for my trap to come back; I sent Farley home

There was no answer. Doctor Hunter thought the book must be a very interesting and engrossing one, as "ANYTHING that is produced in Canada from Canadian materials, by the application of Canadian brain and labor, will always have first call with me. And it's only good business on my part that it should."

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might possibly have caught up the book at random on hearing his approach to avoid discussing a disagree-

"Look here, Felix," he said, going around the chair and laying a not very gentle hand on his shoulder, "just pay attention to me for a minute. I want to talk to you about Farley. Hard lessons and rough discipline are all very well in theory, but you had no right, no business, to thrash that boy as you have. There was no rhyme or reason in it."

"Indeed!" he said, closing the book, "who says so?"

"I do. I say so. What his back and shoulders are like I don't profess to know, but the parts exposed, one side of his neck, one cheek, and hand, are seamed with livid wales almost as big as my little finger; they stand up like whipcord. From one ear, the lobe of the right ear, you have drawn blood, and the neckband of his shirt seemed jagged and torn to shreds. It's the most cruel, the most cowardly, piece of work I've met with in the whole course of my professional experience." Felix took the pipe from his mouth, pitched the book on the table, and

"I don't intend to be bullied and insulted in my own house, Hunter," he said, towering on the hearthrug, "so you will desist or go."

"I don't mean to quarrel with you, Fleming," he said firmly, "that won't answer my purpose, but I certainly shall speak my mind as a surgeon in relation to his patient. I found Farley unconscious; I had some trouble oring; "that's different; I-he is only to bring him round, and my honest opinion is that he is seriously hurt. I am positive a few more such blows would have ended his career for good and bending suddenly he kissed her and all in this sphere. What did you do it for?" he asked, as he saw Felix

> woman alone." "You need not have troubled to do that, my dear boy; you might have left that job to me. I am the right person to chastise the lad if he requires

"To teach him to leave a respectable

"How do you make that out?" Felix asked, his nostrils swelling. "I had my sister's interests to protect."

"And I my future wife's interests." "Since when have you become engaged to Agnes?" "Since I found Farley. You don't

"Has Agnes given you the history of this unpleasant fracas?" "Every detail; I am thoroughly conversant with the facts, both great and

object, Felix?"

"Apparently you don't see any harm in the escapade?"

said earnestly. "The burdens of life Pumping Windmills, Pumps and are neither few nor light. There are Supplies. real ills enough without trying to brew some for ourselves out of passing trivialities. I come in contact with too much sorrow and trouble to care to make much of the petty plagues of life. My work in the midst of sickness, penury, and toll, has taught me a certain kind of philosophy. Our journey through life has to be made, whether it be fair weather or foul, and a wise traveller will take courage from his many comforts, and carry his sunshine with him."

"Of course," Felix said, knocking the ashes from his pipe and refilling it, "your engagement to Agnes alters the

Continued on page 7.

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