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 Ch'town, March 31st, 1900.

RIGHTED AT LAST

BY MARY CECIL HAY

Author of "The Arundel Motto," "Nora's Love Test," "Back to the Old Home," Etc.

(Continued.)

"Lachne," he answered, as he offered her his hand; "that means the glossy-coated; and this little terrier is Leonos, which means gray; and this spaniel, Labro, which means furious. Can you remember after whose dogs mine are named?"

"Yes—Aetneon's," she answered. "Have you fifty?"

"Only these three now," he said, rather gravely; "trusty old friends whom I have had with me many years."

"And from whom you would not like to part, especially this beautiful greyhound?"

"No; I do not know what would tempt me voluntarily to part with Lachne."

From East Cottage, Royden Keith rode on into Kinbury, and, dismounting at the door of the hotel, gave his horse to his groom.

"She is tired enough," he said; "take her in, Edwards, and bring me round Robin Hood in half an hour's time."

"Saddled, sir?" inquired the groom, betraying a little of his astonishment; for had not his master been in the saddle almost since daybreak?

"Saddled, of course," returned Royden, as he mounted the hotel steps.

"I did not expect you back so soon, sir," said Pierce, following Mr. Keith to his private sitting-room; "you ordered dinner at eight. Will you lunch so late as this, sir?"

"I lunched three hours ago," said Royden, as he took his letters from the chimney-piece, with his back to the valet, who seemed stirred a little from his usual middle-aged gravity. "I lunched at the Towers. Send me a glass of wine, that is all."

Following the waiter, who, with the mathematical precision of waiters, set the wine and biscuits before Mr. Keith, came Pierce once more into his master's presence.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, making a show of removing the things from the table, "but are all well at the Towers?"

"All well, thank you, Pierce."

"And everything going on as it should do, sir—as it would if you were there?"

"Just as it would if we were there," amended Royden, smiling at the man's real, though hidden, earnestness.

"You seemed to be summoned so hurriedly, sir, I thought."

"Not summoned at all," said Mr. Keith, as he poured himself a glass of sherry.

"No illness of—the lady's, sir?"

"No."

Royden put down his empty glass and took up another letter. The servant lingered still, but the solemn decorum of his face and manner hid the keen and anxious interest he felt in his master's answers.

"Leave those, Pierce," said Royden, looking up from the paper in his hand; "I am going out again in a few minutes."

"Riding again this evening, sir?"

"Riding again this evening—yes," he

answered, smiling a little now. "But I am only going round the Abbotsmoor woods, and shall be back to dinner. Poor Princess is tired out, but Robin will be fresh and fleet."

"The dogs seem tired, too, sir," said Pierce, wondering at the run their master had given them that day.

"Then they need not come; they shall make their own choice. No," mused Royden, slowly tearing the letter in his hand; "I will take Lachne only."

Pierce looked in vain for an apparent reason for this change of purpose.

"To save trouble, I suppose," he thought. "There's always a scene if he tries to leave the greyhound behind."

So Royden Keith, ten minutes afterward, rode from Kinbury to find the answer to that doubt he had expressed at East Cottage.

"I do not know what would tempt me voluntarily to part with Lachne."

CHAPTER VII.

Mrs. Payte stood with the girls at the gate of East Cottage, watching Royden as he rode away.

"Do you like him, Phoebe?" she asked abruptly.

"He is very handsome," Phoebe acknowledged, in a tone of praise as warm as she ever bestowed on any one save her guardian.

"He's not a man to go through life with his hands folded," remarked the old lady, tersely. "Honor, why are you staring up the road? You won't call him handsome, I know—not you. Unless a man has languishing manners like Captain Trent's, and can look at you lackadaisically under his eyelids, and talk in a lazy whisper, you haven't much to say in his favor. Ah, I see why you are staring; here they come! Sound the trumpet, beat the drum! What a delightful conjunction! They remind me of Prior and Swift, who used to walk round the parks together—Prior to make himself fit; Swift to make himself lean."

Honor's eyes had to come back from their distant gaze to see the two advancing figures, and then she turned to Phoebe with a smile.

"I declare I did not know," said the old lady, "that Lawrence Haughton and Hervey Trent were such close friends. What bonds of union lies between them?"

"It must have been Hervey who joined Lawrence on the road," suggested Phoebe, "for I'm sure Lawrence would not overtake and join Hervey of his own accord."

"And pray why not?" inquired Mrs. Payte, sharply. "Would not Mr. Haughton like to be the means of benefiting a young man whose mind is peculiarly alive to good influences?"

"The gentlemen came up to the gate just then, and stopped, with a look of pleasure as well as surprise; but, after that first moment, Honor could see that Lawrence was in one of his moods of brooded ill-humor."

"Walking home, are you?" said the old lady, her shrewd glance impeded by the brim of her ugly brown hat. "What enterprise! But I must stop you here. Look upon East Cottage as a half-way house—the traveller's rest—and when you leave, I will let you take your wards with you, Mr. Haughton. Now, Honor, run and order the tea-table to be brought out."

There was no hesitation in Hervey's mind about accepting this invitation, and though Lawrence paused for a moment he did not refuse.

"I like to have young people round me," observed Mrs. Payte, particularly addressing Hervey, as he threw himself languidly on the garden seat; "it gives me life and vigor. As one grows old and feeble, one likes to study enthusiastically the strength and energy of youth."

"Does one, Mrs. Payte?" inquired Captain Hervey, politely, as his lazy eyes rested on the small wiry form before him. "I should have thought it would have bored one."

"Mr. Haughton, you must not bring your business face here, please; we do not want to make our wills or draw up our marriage settlements—quite yet. We only want to fritter away an hour in nonsensical tea-drinking. Stupid, don't you think?"

"One wasted hour cannot signify very much," the lawyer answered, indifferently.

"Perhaps not, only the difficulty to me is to determine which of our hours are wasted. Now, Selina?"

Mrs. Disbrow rose from her seat in the window, for Honor had come for her and had brought Hervey to carry the easy chair. Mrs. Payte stopped in her own occupation to watch this proceeding, but afterward made up for the lost time by extra snapping.

"She says she likes to have young people about her," fretted Miss Owen, aside to her cousin. "If so, why is she so cross?"

"Now, girls," cried the little old lady from her seat, "we are waiting for you. Go to your separate trays—Honor to the coffee, and you, Phoebe, to the tea. There will be a knight for each of you."

Mrs. Payte leaned back in her seat

after the speech, and waited for the division of labor, watching almost as if she had an interest in it beyond what Theodora Trent called her "unwarranted interference in everything."

"Hervey," said Honor, simply, "will you please to wait upon me?"

The sharp eyes under the brown hat went swiftly up to Lawrence Haughton's face, and the thin lips of this cross old lady stirred a little just at their corners.

"Mr. Haughton, I patronize your end of the table, and Phoebe's tea. I look upon coffee as a lingering poison for a bilious constitution like mine. Your vaunted air has done me no good so far."

Honor glanced at the real invalid, who never spoke of her ailments, and grew even more gentle in her attentions.

"Hervey," she said, "did not Mrs. Trent tell us last night that Lady Lawrence said Kinbury air would kill her?"

"I dare say," assented Hervey, languidly. "I rarely recollect what she says."

"In that particular matter, Lady Lawrence's opinion entirely coincides with mine, then," said the old lady, smiling graciously in answer to Hervey's words. "Though in other respects I fail to learn any good of her. You are more privileged, I presume; you are sure to hear the best points of her character."

(To be continued.)

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