

schoolhouse, though he had a fight on for a band of Italian emigrants that had been corralled by the 'Calvin Colonisation Society,' the busy pastor let all these and a dozen other pressing engagements go by for the nonce, and took the evening train for the Parnassian heights that stood some twenty miles away from the smoke-veiled city in which for the last five years he had found his life-work. He was no stranger in the great university whose splendid range of buildings crowned the hill. His broad, strenuous life had brought him in contact and sometimes in conflict with many of the professors and students engaged in sociological and economic studies in the neighboring city; but he had never met Professor Weatherby, and he was conscious of a certain humorous trepidation as to the coming interview.

But Jack, the son of his only brother, was very dear to him, and he felt that he alone, perhaps, could break down the gnarl of prejudice that stood in the path of his boy's happiness.

So, armed with fitting weapons for the 'tug of war,' he approached the pleasant little home at whose garden gate a slender, white-robed girl was gathering roses. 'Miss Weatherby, I presume,' said the visitor, and as the pale, pure young face, with its shadowy eyes, turned to him, Father Hugh felt he really did not blame Jack for losing his young heart and head.

'I am Father Devon,' he continued.

'Father Devon!' The sweet face flushed and then paled again as quickly; the name was evidently a shock.

'Perhaps,' the visitor went on, and the kind eyes twinkled, 'a pleasanter introduction would be "Jack's Uncle Hugh." I have come out to see your father.'

'To see papa!' The violet eyes widened with surprise and dismay. 'Oh, you can't, I am sure!'

'Why not,' asked Father Hugh, composedly.

'Oh, don't you know? Has not Jack told you?' was her breathless question.

'All about you, yes,' the visitor answered frankly. 'And though I didn't approve at first, I must confess, I have come round. Jack is very dear to me, and—since there is only one wife in all the world for him, as he says—I want to see him happy. So I concluded to accept your father's invitation to come out and—'

'Papa's—invitation!' stammered Iris, the professor's thunders as re-echoed by her mother still ringing in her ears; 'oh, there must be some mistake—'

'None at all,' answered Father Hugh, pleasantly. 'I have his letter in my pocket.' And he drew out an envelope whose crabbed chirography was unmistakable. 'So just tell him, if you please, I am here—at his request—'

And, with a sudden joyful light breaking in upon her bewilderment, Iris darted off to the study where her father sat, a grim stoic philosopher in the fading sunlight. For it had been a hard day on the professor; the skies of Parnassus had been heavy with gloom, and the old Greek, usually lapped in delicious domestic calm, had found the atmosphere both depressing and irritating.

Vainly he strove to lose himself in the pages of the *Bulletin*; even the brilliant pen of 'Thucydides' seemed to flash with antagonistic light as it pierced the old pagan darkness and stormed the 'Comparative Philosophies,' tottering before the conquering Cross; and the professor returned to his personal grievance with a new rancor.

It was all so absurd, so unnecessary; he would never yield to such foolish whims, such unfilial defiance. There was no reason why Iris should not be married by a Mr. Martin, a man of liberal views, in the college chapel. But to have a priest—a Romish priest—who was scarcely allowed to think—mumbling bad Latin here in his very house, marrying his daughter—he would have none of it.

And the professor pressed his lips together in an ugly, stubborn line, and, leaning back in his chair, resolutely shut his eyes to the sweet, sad vision of a pale young man, with shadowy eyes, that had been haunting him appealingly all day, for the father's heart was traitor to his head, struggle as he might.

Calling stoic philosophy to his aid, the professor had just vowed to himself that all the legions of Rome could not stir him from his stand, when there came a soft flutter through the doorway, and, with a low, glad cry, Iris threw herself into his arms.

'Oh, papa, dearest, sweetest, best papa, how good of you how good of you! Oh, I knew that you loved me too well to break my heart. What a wretched, wretched day it has been, for mamma said you would never give in, and now—now, oh, my own darling, precious papa'—each adjective punctuated by a rapturous kiss—'you have made me the happiest girl in all the whole world—'

'Eh—what—what! What do you mean, child?' gasped the bewildered professor.

'Oh, you need not pretend any more,' cooed Iris, with a soft little laugh; 'you've given up to us, I know, you dear, darling old papa. You sent for him—to talk things over—'

'Sent for him!' exclaimed the professor desperately, 'Who—where—what are you talking about, child?'

'Why, Jack's Uncle Hugh, of course,' laughed Iris happily, as, all smiles and blushes, she turned to the doorway; 'you sent for him, and here he is—Father Devon, papa—'

'Father Devon!' roared the professor, starting to his feet and staring in bewilderment at the tall, dignified stranger in unmistakable Romish garb who advanced to meet him.

'Yes,' was the courteous reply, 'Father Hugh Devon, who is most happy to accept the very cordial invitation to visit you sent to me through Dr. Vance, of the *Bulletin*.'

'Eh, what! Then you are "Thucydides"?' cried the professor, fairly staggering back with the shock. "'Thucydides"—a Romish priest!'

'But none the worse Greek for it, I trust,' said Father Hugh, with the mellow laugh that had disarmed many a foeman. 'As you say, we're kindred spirits, and should be friends. I see you have my last article here,' glancing at the *Bulletin*, which had dropped from the professor's nerveless hand. 'I have brought you an old manuscript to which it refers, and which in your letter to-day you expressed a wish to see. I unearthed it in an old monastery on Mount Athos several years ago. The authorship I consider doubtful. I would like your opinion on it,' and the speaker drew a roll of mouldy parchment from his pocket. It was the final stroke. Old Zeus dropped his thunderbolts and surrendered unconditionally. Five minutes later priest and pagan were bending together over the old Greek manuscript, and Iris flitted back in happy bewilderment to tell her mother that Father Devon held the field, and the 'tug of war' was over.

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'Yes, I think I've made everything right for you, Jack,' said Father Hugh next day to his astonished nephew. 'It required some nerve to brave old Zeus in his own pagan height, but I took the chances for you, and, though I generally conceal the fact, I had a bad attack of cacoethes scribendi in my younger days, and might have been a writer if the mercy of God had not made me a priest. But I suppose there's a touch of old fever in my blood, for whenever I get in a tight place I reach for my rusty pen. And the church badly needed a painting this summer, so I have been doing heavy reviewing for the monthlies over my old college name. It kept me up into the small hours of the morning, Jack, but it paid. The church is painted and I am to marry you, Jack, in the professor's parlor with full parental permission, and old Zeus himself is to give away the bride—who, if all signs do not fail, Jack, will soon be as good a little Catholic as I could choose for you. "Thucydides" and his rusty pen settled matters and won the "tug of war!"'—Mary T. Waggaman, in the *Catholic Columbian*.

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