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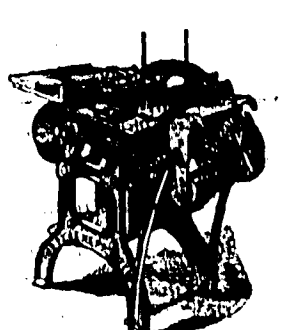
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TRESSILIAN COURT;

OR,
The Baronet's Son.

BY ARTHUR HARRIS LEWIS,
Author of "The Double Life," "The
Balfour's Scheme," "The Sundered
Hearts," "The Lady of Kildare,"
"A Life at Stake," "The House
of Secrets," &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

A FATEFUL CATASTROPHE.

A wild storm was raging upon the Medi-
terranean Sea, near the close of a dreary
November day, and sky and waters were
black with the gloom of the sudden and
furious tempest, before which a small sail-
ing vessel was reeling under bare poles.
Her hull and rigging proclaimed her Sar-
dinian. She was the *Gull*, Captain Vian-
ni, master, on her way from Cagliari to
Palermo.

She had on board two seamen and two
passengers.
These passengers were Englishmen, who
had procured passage on the *Gull* to Pal-
ermo, whence they intended to embark by
steamer to Marseilles, the next day.

While the Captain and his assistants
were attending to their duties, and expres-
sing apprehensions as to their safety, the
two Englishmen stood apart, leaning against
the low bulwarks, and surveying the wild
scene around them.

The two men were both young, appar-
ently of the same age, about three and twenty,
but evidently they were not of the same
station in life.

One, the more striking of the two, was
aristocratic in his bearing, tall, slender and
handsome, with light brown hair, a nose
of fearless line, eyes, set under a wide
and massive forehead, and a smile blow-
ing back from his face. Noble, generous
and kind-hearted, he had an adventurous
disposition and a dauntless courage.

He was Guy Tressilian, the only son and
heir of Sir Arthur Tressilian, Baronet of
Tressilian Court, England.

His companion presented a remarkable
contrast to him, being also tall and
slender and fair, with tawny hair and mas-
tache, but he had not the frank smile, the
bright, fearless look, or the joyous spirit
that characterized young Tressilian. Young
as he was, he had seen much of the dark
side of life, and his experiences had been
such as to develop in him some of the worst
qualities of his nature.

He was Jasper Lowder, Guy Tressilian's
niece, traveling companion and bosom
friend.

"The meeting and connection of the two
had a touch of romance. Young Tressilian
had spent four years in a German univer-
sity, whence he had been graduated with
honor. On leaving the university, in obe-
dience to his father's written command, he
had undertaken a tour of the countries in-
cluding the Mediterranean Sea, in company
with one of his late tutors. This gentle-
man, being unexpectedly promoted to a pro-
fessorship, abandoned Tressilian at Baden,
leaving him to find another traveling com-
panion.

On the evening of the very day after this
desertion, as Guy Tressilian was sauntering
through the streets of Baden, he had been
assaulted by a trio of his own countrymen,
all more or less intoxicated. It was appar-
ent that they took him for another, and in-
tended to make a scene, upon him.
Without allowing him to speak, they forced
him to defend himself. Guy was getting
the worst of the conflict, when a stranger
came running to his assistance,
and in a few moments the two had put the
ruffians to flight.

This stranger who came so opportunely to
Guy's assistance was Jasper Lowder. His
resemblance to young Tressilian awak-
ened in the latter a romantic interest. He
questioned Lowder, learned that he was
poor and alone in the world, and took him
with him to his hotel. Believing that the
similarity of features indicated a similarity
of tastes and natures, he engaged Lowder
as his traveling companion, and the past
year they had spent together more like
brothers than like employer and employed.

"This storm is a regular Levantier,"
said Lowder, clearing with both hands to
the bulwarks. "Do you think the craft
will stand it, Tressilian?"

"Oh, yes," answered young Tressilian,
wiping the salt spray from his face. "The
Captain knows the Sicilian coast perfectly.
In two hours we shall be in the bay of Pal-
ermo. In three hours we shall be domicil-
ed in the best room of the hotel Trinacria,
with the best supper Messer Ragusa can
furnish. And tomorrow, at noon, he ad-
vised, "we shall embark for Marseilles in a
Messageries steamer."

"And from Marseilles you will proceed
to England and to Tressilian Court," said
Lowder, with some bitterness. "And I—
what is to become of me? I have had a
year of unalloyed happiness, and now comes
back the drudgery of the hopeless toil, the
anxieties of the wretched old life. You
picked me up at a tavern, poor adventurer
seeking to gain a living by teaching Eng-
lish, and the same destiny is open to me
now."

Tressilian turned his handsome face upon
his companion in surprised and affectionate
reproach.

"Jasper!" he exclaimed, "you talk
strangely. Do you suppose I have called
you friend and brother so long, and loved
you so well, to lose you now? I meant to
have written to father concerning you and
your future, Jasper, but his sudden recall
received yesterday, causes me to return
home without writing. I shall telegraph
from Marseilles that you will come home
with me. And you will, will you not? You
will not abandon me, my friend? I will
charge myself with your future. I will see
that you obtain the position to which your
talents entitle you. You have no ties to
keep you on the Continent?"

A strange expression passed over Jasper
Lowder's face.

"No, I have no ties," he said huskily.
"And you will go home with me?"

"What will your father say to my com-
ing?" demanded Lowder. "He will think
your generosity quite new. He will dismiss
from his house the hired companion who
dances to reasonable hire."

A sudden lurch of the little vessel wave
sweeping over the deck, interrupted the
sentence.

"You wrong my father," said Tressilian,
his blue eyes kindling, when the vessel
righted. "He is the noblest man in the
world. He will welcome my friends as he
would you. You will love him, Jasper, as I do,
when you know him."

"He doesn't seem very affectionate," re-

marked Lowder. "You have been away
from your home five years, and he has but
just recalled you!"

Young Tressilian's cheeks flushed, as he
looked at the level-glowing sea. The tem-
pestary light upon the tempestuous sea.
"You know, or can guess, the reason,"
Jasper said, with something of an ef-
fort. "My father has a ward, the daugh-
ter of an old friend. Ah! I hear the wind
shriek! The gale is interesting!"

"Yes," assented Lowder. "And the ward
is Miss Irbly—the golden-haired blonde of
whom you have talked so much, and with
whom you have exchanged letters?"

"Yes," assented Lowder. "He did not wish
us to grow up together, lest we should learn
to regard each other as brother and sister.
When Blanchette came to live at the Court,
my father sent me to Germany. The night
before I left home, he called me into his
library and told me all his hopes and plans
for my future, and entreated me to continue
worthy of his innocent ward, and to keep
my heart pure for her. I have done so, Jas-
per. I have never yet loved any woman.
And yesterday I received my father's sum-
mons to come home. He recalled me
after five years of absence. I know the
wish that he has nearest his heart. He wants
me to return and marry Blanchette. I shrink
from the proposed marriage. I dread con-
fessing to him that I have been a poor
man's son. And I dread offending my dear
father, whom I love better than any woman.
It is hard, Jasper, to resist against the
hopes and plans of a kind and generous
father, whose very love for me causes him
to urge on this marriage!"

"Is it?" said Lowder, deeply, and with a
strange smile full of sneering bitterness.
"My experience has been widely different
from yours, Tressilian. Did I ever tell you
of my father?"

"No. Look it for granted that he is a
good man."

"Perhaps he is, I don't know," said
Lowder with a reckless laugh. "But if he
is, he is a second-rate. Don't start, Tre-
ssilian, at my unflattering speech. Wait
till you hear my story. I am in a desper-
ate mood to-night. This storm stirs up all
the bad within me. As nearly as I can
discover, my father was the younger son of
a proud old county family."

"You do not know, then?" asked Tre-
ssilian, pressing his companion's hand.

"I have no proofs of it. All I positively
know is this. My mother was of humble
station, pretty, with blue eyes and an apple
blossom face, and tender, appealing ways.
She was the daughter of a widow, residing
at Brighton. The widow, my grandmother,
kept a lodging-house, and my father, a gay,
dashing young fellow, came to lodge with
her. As might have been expected, he fell
in love with his landlady's daughter. He
offered the young girl marriage, on con-
dition that the union should be kept secret
until his affairs brightened and he chose to
divulge it. The young girl loved him. Her
mother was ambitious and peevish. The
result was the lover had his way, and mar-
ried the daughter of his landlady quietly,
almost secretly. Then he took his bride
to London, to a shop and obscure lodgings,
where, a year later, I was born."

The wind for a moment drowned his
voice. As it presently lulled, he resumed,
recklessly and with passionate bitterness.
"For years my mother and I lived in
those sty, obscure lodgings until her
bloom had faded, and she had grown thin
and wan and nervous. My father visited
us at stated seasons, once or twice a week,
but he never brought any of his family to
call upon me. I doubt if his aristocratic
relatives ever suspected the existence of the
faded wife and the son of whom he was
secretly ashamed. I have good reason to
believe that he had fine lodgings at the
West End, where he was supposed to be a
bachelor, and that he went into fashionable
society, while my poor mother and I lived
obscurely. He was a profligate and a rascal,
but he had an air of fashion that awakened
my boyish admiration, and aroused my
mother's affectionate pride in him. She
was always pleading to be introduced to his
relatives, and to have her son publicly ac-
knowledgeed. But my father always put
her off, saying that he was not yet ready.
Worn out and despairing, my mother died
when I was ten years old."

Again the wind shrieked past, again the
little vessel lurched, the sea sweeping over
the deck.

The captain screamed his orders to his
men, and for a few minutes disorder reigned.
"A nasty bit of weather!" said Lowder.
"And a bad sky!"

"Yes, but I've seen as bad," returned
Tressilian. "We shall make port all right,
never fear. We must be well on toward
the Cape di Gallo. And it's only seven
miles from the Cape to Palermo."

"But seven miles in this storm are worse
than seventy in good weather. These
coasts are dangerous, Tressilian."

Lowder shuddered as he surveyed sea
and sky.

"But about your father, Jasper?" said
Tressilian, who had become deeply inter-
ested in his companion's story. "What
did he do after your mother's death?"

"I remained at the old lodgings with
my mother's old servant, and my mother,
my father visiting me several times, and ex-
pressing anxiety as to what he should do
with me. A week after my mother's death
he told me that his brother was dead. A
month later, his father was killed by being
thrown from his horse. My father came
into riches and honors by those deaths. At
last deciding to rid himself of me, he took
me down to Brighton, to my old grand-
mother. Her sons were dead, she had
given up keeping lodgers, and had grown
tiresomely. He promised her five hundred
pounds a year to keep me, and to keep also
the secret of my paternity, solemnly prom-
ising to acknowledge me some day as his
son and heir. The old woman agreed to
carry out his wishes. She would have
done anything for money. I never saw my
father again. I went to school, grew up,
and at the age of twenty one came into my
grandmother's money, the fruits of years
of saving, she dying at that time. I did
not know where to seek him, if I had wish-
ed to. I took my money and came abroad.
I had been two years on the Continent,
and had spent my little fortune when I met
you. The rest you know."

"An odd, romantic story! But why did
your father abandon you?"

"That he might be freed of embarrassment
to make a grand marriage. From what
my grandmother said at different times, I
concluded that my father was in love with
a titled lady before my mother's death.
No doubt to married this lady. If he
loved her, this lady's son may be his acknow-
ledged heir. My father has not told me
of the son of his first lady, but I should
marry. I have a fancy that I shall meet

him some day," and Jasper's brow dark-
ened to deeper blackness. "However, I
stand no chance of ever receiving justice at
his hands."

"What is your father's name, Jasper?"
asked Tressilian.

Lowder's face darkened. He bit his lip
savagely.

"What I have told you about myself I
learned from my own observation, or from
chance words of my parents and grand-
mother. My mother's maiden name was
Jenette Lowder. At our London lodgings
my father bore the name of Lowder. I do
not know his real name, but I should know
his face anywhere, although I have not
seen him in thirteen years. My mother
was actually married, Tressilian, but I never
heard of her name. The clergyman who
married my mother was dead; the witnesses
also. When my grandmother was dying
she tried to tell me the story. She had
put it off too long. All that I could under-
stand of her mumbings was the name of
Devereux. I shall never forget that name—
Devereux. Probably that was my father's
name—my own, rightful name. But as I
should never find him if I sought him,
and as he would repulse me if I did
find him, I stand no chance of inheriting
his property. He may be dead. He may
have other sons who have succeeded him.
It is all a mystery, but the prominent
truth is that I am an outcast, poor, dis-
owned and friendless."

Tressilian's face warmed to him.
"My poor friend!" he said. "Must I
say again that you are not friendless while
I live. My father has influence enough to
obtain for you a government appointment.
This might straighten itself out some
day. But if it don't, you are resolute
enough to make your own happiness."

He glanced at Lowder's hand, and looked
with warm bright eyes, full of sympathy,
into Lowder's lowering face.

"There had been a temporary lull in the
storm. But as the two stood there, the
tempest revived and swept over the wild
sea in maddened rage.

There was no time for talking now. The
wind rose so high that words would scarce-
ly have been distinguished. The storm
that had gone before had been but a pre-
lude to this. The sea-dogs were break-
ing and groaning, a more corkle shell on
the billows.

"Mother of Mercies!" wailed the cap-
tain. "It's all up with us, signores. I
can't make out the Cape in this darkness.
We shall go on the rocks. St. Anthony
save us!"

The seamen echoed his cries.

The two young Englishmen, compre-
hending their peril, clasped hands in sil-
ence.

For the next few minutes it seemed that
a pandemonium reigned.

Then a noise like the report of a cannon
suddenly boomed through the storm and
the darkness. The little vessel shivered,
staggered, and careened upon her side.

She had struck upon a rock.

A moment later crew and passengers
were struggling in the water.

A few moments of buffeting and toss-
ings, of vain struggling and agonized, in-
voluntary prayer, and then Jasper Lowder
felt his senses slip from him, and he be-
came unconscious.

He lay upon a rocky beach of the Sicilian
shore, bruised and weak as a child.

He opened his eyes. The wind had spent
its fury, and now moaned along the coast
with a desolate, despairing wail. The
waves beat against the rocks.

Lowder struggled to his elbow.

"Wrecked!" he muttered. "I am
cast ashore while the others are drowned!
Oh! this is terrible! I have lost my best
friend to-night!"

He moaned and wrung his hands.

"He is dead, who would have done so
much for me, and I so worthless am saved.
All my hopes of life and luxurious life
must be resigned now!"

At that moment he beheld a dark object
at a little distance in the water. The waves
dashed the body on the shore at his feet.
He put his hands on his knees. How cold
and wet it felt! He felt like the face of a
dead man. Lowder's fingers came in con-
tact with the soft, silken moustache, and he
knew that the body was that of Guy Tre-
ssilian.

Of the five who had stood on the sloop's
deck a half hour earlier, three were alone,
were left. The captain and his crew had
found their deaths among the cruel yawl-
ing waters.

He thrust his hand under the waist-
coat of his friend, but he could not per-
ceive the beating of his heart. Despair
took possession of him.

"Dead!" he said, shrilly. "Dead! I
would have done so much for me if he
had lived! And his father and the young
girl he was to have married will wait in
vain for his coming. His place at Tre-
ssilian Court is empty. Who can fill it?

It seemed to him that the moonlight at his
side echoed the question: *Who can fill
the place left vacant by noble Guy Tre-
ssilian?*

A thought came to him—a thought so
strange and sinister that he shivered invol-
untarily. Again he felt of Tressilian's
heart. It gave no throbbing against his hand.
He passed his hand over Tressilian's head
and discovered a gaping wound in the scalp.
The hair was dotted with blood.

Putting his hand into his breast pocket,
Lowder drew out his little water-proof
flask and struck a light. The red flicker
danced on young Tressilian's face.

How ghastly and terrible it looked! The
eyes were closed, the smile was gone. The
scalp of death seemed set on the noble fea-
tures.

of Tressilian and drew out his private note-
book, a packet of letters, a few trinkets.
He secured these among his own wet gar-
ments. Their possession seemed to give
him courage, and his face hardened, and he
knew beside the body of his friend and
rifled his garments of all that they contain-
ed, bestowing his plunder on his own per-
son.

Then he took his own purse, his note-
book, a few receipts and trifles from his
own pockets and put them in the pockets
of Tressilian.

"It is done," he whispered to himself,
looking with wild defiant eyes through the
darkness. "No one is harmed. He is
dead. If he had lived he would have pro-
vided for me. As he is dying or dead, I
must provide for myself. This likeness be-
tween us will make my fortune. His
friends will be spared a terrible grief, and
I shall live at last! Fortune gives me a
chance to gain name and wealth at one
lucky stroke!"

As if to give himself no chance for re-
pentance, he arose to his feet and looked
his searching glances in an inland direction.
A light, as from a cottage window, glim-
mered faintly through the thick haze,
caught his gaze.

Raising his voice he called loudly:
"Help! Ho there! help!"

The wind had abated, and his cries rang
out through the night with startling dis-
tinctness. The light he had seen moved
and disappeared. A minute later, answer-
ing cries reached Lowder's ears, and he
heard hasty steps, and saw the approach-
ing light of a lantern, borne aloft by a man's
upraised arm.

"This way," shouted Lowder. We are
wrecked on the rocks. For the love of
Heaven, hasten!"

The bearer of the lantern attended by a
male companion, came running to him, and
was soon at his side. The lantern bearer
was a rough Sicilian, but evidently of some-
what higher degree. Both were all excite-
ment, astonishment and sympathy.

In as few words as possible Lowder told
the story of the shipwreck, and called at-
tention to the condition of his noble young
employer.

"I think he is dead," he said, in a chok-
ing voice. "Carry him up to your cabin.
Let everything be done that can be done to
save him. I will pay you well for any kind-
ness you show him. Excuse me, I have my
traveling companion. I loved him as if he
had been my brother instead of only my
hired attendant. Poor Jasper!"

The two Sicilians lifted the helpless form
of poor young Tressilian, and carried it be-
tween them toward their cottage. Jasper
Lowder followed them, bawling his hosannas.
The two men publish as a specimen chap-
ter; but the continuation of this story will
be found only in the N. Y. Ledger. Ask
for the number dated January 7th, which
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odical in the world. It will publish none
but the very, very best. Its moral tone is
pure, and its circulation the largest. No
every person who takes it is happier for
having it.

A Death for a Death.

Long ago, when I was a child, I had my
fortune told. The woman, brown, gipsy-
ish and evil, peered into my face and said,
"Shun blonde-haired men; one of them
will bring you much sorrow."

I laughed then. Afterwards I remem-
bered.

I never could understand how I came to
such good fortune as the possession of Lu-
cio Pomfret's love. In no rash lover's rap-
ture do I say that she was as beautiful an
angel. I have never seen equalled the snow
of her skin, the blue of her eyes, the pure
gold of her hair.

She was the only daughter of one of the
wealthiest men on 'change. The Pomfrets
were not only wealthy, but naturally noble
men and women, of the highest culture.
Lucio's brother was my friend; I became
their guest, and my darling became my
promised wife.

Judge Pomfret promised me his daugh-
ter, and then we kept the secret amongst
us. Lucio wished it so; she would not be
Mrs. Vernon in perspective; she said, play-
fully, but with an earnest feeling beneath,
I did not love her less that she clung as
long as possible to the girlish life that had
been blessed to and by her. We were
not to be married for a year.

Much of the time I was absent from the
city, but our meetings were only the sweet-
er for that. At those times, Lucio was
nearly shy of her affection. Her sunny,
guileless eyes looked into mine with un-
wavering trust; she would kiss my lips and
cheeks, and roll the curls of my black hair
over her fingers, in open enjoyment of our
relation to each other. I never thought of
doubting her love for me, and yet—

Lucio's twentieth birthday was celebra-
ted. She was to have a party, or floral
festival. The family were at Rose Hill,
their country seat. It was June weather.
I read Lucio's little note with a pang of
regret:

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