

**THE HANDSOME  
HUMES, IN THREE  
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

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The handsome Humes, In three volumes. Vol. III by William Black

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**WILLIAM BLACK**

**THE HANDSOME  
HUMES, IN THREE  
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# THE HANDSOME HUMES

BY  
WILLIAM BLACK

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VOL. III.

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# THE HANDSOME HUMES.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PUGILIST'S DAUGHTER.

LIKE to the slow-pulsating throb of the screw of a great steamer at sea, all through the long hours of the night certain words and phrases kept repeating themselves in his brain in a dull mechanical way: things not wholly unconnected either—the designations of the officers who presided over the ancient gymnasia—the names of the different contests and the conditions attached—lines and passages from his favourite Greek authors in laudation of physical prowess and feats of strength and skill, and the like: accompanied by visions, too—now

of the godlike man, Euryalos son of King Mekisteus, about to enter the boxing-ring; now of the heaven-born Polydeuces overthrowing the giant-champion of the Beryces; again of Simaetha confiding to the Lady Moon the story of her tragic love—of her meeting with Delphis and Eudamippus on their return from ‘the glorious wrestler’s toil’—‘their breasts were brighter of sheen than thysel, Selene!’ For ere he went to sleep this young Fellow of All Souls’ had been valiantly striving to convince himself that a profession and an exercise that his beloved folk of the great days held in high honour might very well be tolerated in these later times; and he was resolving that if this statement about Mr. Summers were true—and several surprising coincidences seemed to point to its truth—he would make no apology, he would take no shame to himself for the alliance he had formed. All this was very fine and heroic; it was at any

rate some little thing he could do for Nan's sake ; and he went to bed comforted.

But when he awoke to the cold light of the new day, matters began to assume a very different, and a very grave aspect. How, for example, was he to introduce an ex-pugilist to all those proud Hays and Humes and their families, or even to some college friend whom he might accidentally meet in town? He had never considered the necessity of introducing Mr. Summers to anybody. Nan's father had so persistently effaced himself and kept himself in the background—placing her forward as the only person to be considered—that Sidney had unconsciously fallen in with this arrangement, as he would have fallen in with any arrangement that secured to him Nan herself, with her musical undertones and her deep-wounding eyes. Nevertheless and undoubtedly marriage would bring him this father-in-law, whatever kind of man he was or might have been ; and the odium with