

**CHEVELEY: OR, THE
MAN OF
HONOUR, VOL. II**

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CHAPTER I.

"To-night in Venice we have placed our scene."
GEORGE COLMAN'S Epilogue to Clementina.

"There is a gloom in deep love as in deep water: there is a silence in it which suspends the foot; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface."—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

"Now since we are alone, let us examine
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt—
Which I must fathom." It is a hidden secret
SHELLEY.

"In many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal."
COLERIDGE.

The day at length dawned, upon the evening of which Madame d'A.'s long-talked-of and, by some, long-wished-for masquerade was to take place. Fanny and Saville, as every one knew, (at least every one of their own party,) were to figure as the knave and queen of hearts, in the pack of living cards. The Dowager Lady de Clifford had announced it as her intention to go as Queen Elizabeth; consequently her eldest son immediately fixed upon Lord Leicester, while the amiable Herbert resolved upon personating the less-favoured but more intellectual Sir Walter Raleigh, especially as he knew his exemplary parent required a cloak upon all occasions, he determined to have one ready. Major Nonplus meant to aston-

ish the natives by appearing in all the blue cloth and gold lace dignity of an English parish beadle. Mrs. Seymour had resolved upon going as Dominechino's Sibyl; for, to say nothing of a very beautiful face much resembling it, she had a very beautiful scarlet Delhi scarf, which was the very thing for the turban. Her sposo had not yet returned from Padua, so no one knew what he intended to go as. Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, much against his will, had been teased into going; so, after some trouble, a little glue, a quantity of quills, and a large skin of black kid, he turned into a very respectable, but somewhat overgrown, porcupine. Mowbray had tried by every possible means to find out what Lady de Clifford intended going as; for he knew that ever since his unlucky speech that day at dinner in Milan, she had relinquished her original design of going as Johanna Queen of Naples. Even to the servants had he applied in vain—servants who, in general, act by their employers' secrets as the reeds did when Midas's barber whispered the mystery of his asses' ears to the earth—tell them to the whole world. The fact was, that Julia shrunk from assuming any character, lest it might give him an opportunity of adopting a *pendant* to it, and so facilitate an *eclaircissement*, which, of all things on earth, she most dreaded; for she felt that it would bring about that crisis which must separate them for ever. That time, she felt, would come but too soon, and she might ward it off by keeping things as they were. Vain delusion! who ever yet succeeded, by shutting the eyes of their heart, in lulling it to sleep? She resolved, therefore, to wear a plain blue domino, and told Beryll to put very thick lace to the curtain of her mask, and not to let even her sister know what she intended to go in.

Mowbray, thus foiled at every point, determined to assume the dignity of mystery on his own account, and having secured the dress of a Carthusian friar, told his servant he should not want him at dressing-time, much to the disappointment of Mr. Sanford, who felt greatly hurt at this unpardonable want of confidence on the part of his master, and could only console himself by telling all the couriers, ladies-maids, and valets at dinner, that *his gentleman's* dress would be the most splendid and handsomest at the ball that night; but though he had had a great deal

of trouble in arranging it, no earthly power should get him to tell what it was, as Mr. Mowbray wished it kept a profound secret, and let other people do what they would, he never told anything his master did not wish to have known—when he did not know it himself.

The morning was sultry in the extreme, and every one seemed unable to move off the sofa except Major Nonplus, who was rehearsing his role for the evening in his beadle's dress, running about like an armadillo, fussing and fidgeting every one.

Herbert Grimstone had left the room in disgust, for he had given Monsieur Barbouiller his pamphlet "On the Present Administration" to read, begging that he would make any marginal remarks that struck him. Now, all that did strike him was the extreme arrogance and egotism of the whole affair; consequently, the only remarks he had made were, wherever such sentences occurred as "This, in *my* opinion, was the only measure to save the country, and this the ministers carried," or, "*My* opinion of the Irish appropriation clause was expressed under another administration, and that opinion is now borne out by the conduct of the present ministry, though *their* opinions were decidedly adverse to it when out of office, which proves what *I* have ever asserted—that is, that the Whigs are the only sound, true, liberal, and enlightened legislators, for they *know* that *change* is the quintessence of all reform; and as far as measures (not men) go, they are continually acting upon that knowledge"—all the remarks, then, that Monsieur Barbouiller made were to irradiate the personal pronoun in every such sentence with a glory round it, to the no small amusement of Fanny and Saville, who declared he would get up an opposition pamphlet, and present it to him that night at the ball; and retiring for the purpose of writing it, Fanny was left alone with Mowbray and her sister, who was embroidering the last letter of the motto on Lord Leicester's garter, and whom the former, in spite of herself, was making die with laughter at a *scena* she had got up of the supposed virgin demeanour of the dowager queen, and the amatory devotion of her two courtier sons. Fanny was in the midst of an imaginary speech of the mimic queen to Lord Leicester about his *head* and *heart*, when Lord de Clifford himself en-

tered, and hearing Mowbray's laugh, and seeing Fanny in the middle of the room, with her hands out like his illustrious mother, he said, folding his arms, putting his head back and drawing in, and biting his upper lip, as was his wont when he wanted to be ultra dignified, "As usual, Miss Neville, at your buffoonery, I suppose. If there is one thing more low and degrading than another, and more a proof of imbecility of mind, it is that turn for mimicry which you are eternally indulging in."

"I must say," said Fanny, bowing to this complimentary speech, "that *Peau benite de la cour* of the Elizabethian age is not quite so sweet, my lord of Leicester, as that of our own."

"Never mind, Miss Neville," said Mowbray; "I have observed that persons who cannot themselves mimic, have no toleration for, but a great dread of, those who can; however, you have some good authorities with you: is it not Percival who says, 'Parody is a favourite flower both of ancient and modern literature; its ludicrous properties derive their wit from association, and never fail to produce admiration and delight, when it unites taste in selection with felicity of application; even licentious specimens of it move to laughter; for we are always inclined to be diverted with mimicry, or ridiculous imitation, whether the original be an object of respect, or indifference, or even of contempt?' Recollect, too, that a polished Athenian audience heard with bursts of mirthful applause, even the discourses of their favourite Socrates burlesqued upon the stage. These 'wise saws,' concluded Mowbray, laughing, "may perhaps console you for more 'modern instances' of disapprobation."

"I'm not quite sure that they will," said Fanny, "for there was a great deal of truth in Hogarth's answer to the young lady who said she envied him his powers of caricaturing."

"What was that?" asked Mowbray.

"Why, that the sense of the ridiculous had destroyed for him the beautiful; for, that in the face of an angel he could not help detecting something to caricature. It is for the same reason that one never can sympathize with an habitual sneerer, however affectingly and beautifully some of their thoughts may be expressed. I feel this in a peculiar degree with Vol-

taire. One cannot even be sure that he felt it, when he wrote *Zaire vous pleurez!* and this doubt makes one almost check one's own tears, as they rise."

"That is a very profound remark of yours," replied Mowbray, "for there is a depth in all truth, which nothing but sincerity can extract. Even dogs can detect real from affected sorrow or anger, and sympathize with the former, as much as they neglect and pay no attention to the latter."

"Really, Miss Fanny," said Major Nonplus, perpetrating a pirouette, while he flourished his beadle's staff over her head, "I should be quite unhappy if you were my daughter; for they say, so young, and yet so wise, never live long."

"Pardon me," said Mowbray, smiling, "not that I would for a moment set Cicero's authority against yours; but you know the proverb he quotes in his book *De Senectute*. I mean

'Maturè fas senex si diu senex esse velit.'"

"Oh! if you begin with your classics, I'm off," said the major, "for I never had any penchant for the ancients, male or female. Ha! ha! ha! but don't tell Mrs. N. this when you see her," added he, with his finger at the side of his nose, as he made his exit.

"Isn't that d——nd garter finished yet?" said Lord de Clifford gruffly, as he folded a note he had been writing during the foregoing conversation, "Mademoiselle Dantoville would have done it in half the time."

"It is a pity you did not give it to her to do, then," said Fanny indignantly, "as her sister left the room, with tears coursing each other down her cheeks, as she placed the piece of embroidery upon the table, which her lord and master took up, and departed through another door.

"What superior beings your sex are, are they not, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny ironically, as the door closed on her brutal brother-in-law.

"They are superior brutes, when they set about it, certainly," said Mowbray, as he and Fanny went up stairs together to their respective rooms.

That night the lights flitted from room to room, and from corridor to corridor, in *Il Leone Bianco*—and

"Within the surface of the fleeting river,
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immovably unquiet."

The last gondola had rowed away with every one but Lord and Lady de Clifford, and Mowbray, who, knowing that the latter must pass through the drawing-room on her way down stairs, as her bedroom was within it, concealed himself behind a curtain, in the deep recess of one of the windows, that he might ascertain what her dress was. There did not appear to be a soul left in the hotel; for the master and mistress of it, with all the servants, had been invited by Madame de A.'s domestics to go and see the ball. Lord de Clifford had confided "the Virgin Queen" to the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh, while he lingered behind to console his dear Amy, or rather his *bien aimée*, in the school-room, before he joined the brilliant pageant. Poor Julia was still sitting before her toilet, with a heavy heart, and her mask on, listening for the last footsteps to recede, that she might not encounter Mowbray, when the door was unceremoniously opened, and her husband entered, glittering and sparkling in the magnificent dress of Lord Leicester.

"How kind of you," said Julia, springing forward, "to come and let me see you, before you went. Your dress is really beautiful; and how well you have put on the garter," continued she, stooping down to look at it.

"D——n it!" cried he, with an impatient stamp of the foot, "I can't stand here all night for you to look at me as if I was a puppet-show, I want those last books that came from Paris for Mademoiselle Dantoville. I think, poor thing, as she is up there by herself, you might have thought of offering them to her, only you never do anything that you ought to do."

"They are over there," said Lady de Clifford, rather haughtily, pointing to an opposite cheffoniere, with one of her small, white, delicately beautiful hands.

"D——n you, madam," said her tyrant; "what do you mean by speaking to me in that tone, and as he spoke, he inflicted a blow upon the extended hand so violent and sudden, the pain of which was so intense, that poor Julia uttered a faint shriek."

"That's right, madam, make a scene, do, and let all the world know how ill-used you are; why don't you ring the bell for your maid, to come and see what a suffering angel her mistress is? I tell you what it is, madam, if you don't wash your face and dry your

tears, and go to that d—n'd ball directly as becomes my wife, without any further fuss, I'll find some means of bringing you to your senses."

So saying, he walked to the cheffoniere, took the books, and quitted the room through the passage door by which he had entered.

Suffering as she was, both in body and mind, still the habit of obedience and fear were so strong upon her, that poor Julia took off her mask, walked over to a basin, and plunged her face into cold water; but in trying to replace the mask, she found she was unable to raise her right hand; the wrist was out of joint, and swollen to a painful degree. She would gladly have gone to bed, but then, Beryl and all the servants were out; there was no one to undress her, and with her hand in that helpless state it was impossible even to make an attempt at undressing herself: it glanced across her that Mademoiselle Dantoville was up stairs, but she recoiled from the idea of asking her to do anything for her, with a feeling of sickening disgust.

"Yes," said she, "I must go to that horrid ball; if I can but bear the pain, the loose sleeve of my domino will hide my hand, and I must only hold my mask with the other hand till I can find some one to tie it." Having come to this decision, she opened the drawing-room door: it was a dark, lofty, spacious apartment, (like all the Venetian rooms,) at the moment partially and dimly lit by a pair of candles on the high antique mantelpiece, and one solitary Roman lamp on the table. The chains of the lamp, as well as the flame, were blowing about from the draught that came from the casement, and what added to the gloom, was the solemn stillness—only broken in upon by the faint and phantom-like echoes of the plashing oars of every passing gondola.

Lady de Clifford had got half across the room, when Mowbray, anxious to be sure that it was her, leant forward in his ambush to try and see her face, before which, however, she held her mask. The move he had made caused a slight rustling against the curtain. Nervous and ill before, this mysterious noise, added to the sepulchral gloom of the room, completely subdued her already over-excited frame, and tottering towards a sofa, she sank fainting and exhausted upon it, the mask falling at the same time