

**THE FORLORN HOPE:
A NOVEL IN THREEE
VOLUMES, VOL. III**

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The Forlorn Hope: A Novel in Three Volumes, Vol. III by Edmund Yates

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EDMUND YATES

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THE FORLORN HOPE.



CHAPTER I.

THE GULF FIXED.

Fainted! a preposterous thing for a big strong man to do! Fainted, as though he had been a school-girl, or a delicate miss, or a romantic woman troubled with nerves. Mr. Walsingham did not understand it at all. He rang the bell, and told the servant to get some water and some brandy, and something—the right sort of thing; and he picked up Wilmot's head, which was gravitating towards the floor, and he bade him "Hold up, my good fellow!" and then he let his friend's head fall, and gazed at him with extreme bewilderment. He was unused to this kind of performance

was Mr. Walsingham, and felt himself eminently helpless and ridiculous. When the water and the brandy were brought, he administered a handful of the former externally, and a wine-glassful of the latter internally; and Wilmot revived, very white and trembling and dazed and vacant-looking. So soon as he could gather where he was, and what had occurred, he made his apologies to Mr. Walsingham, and begged he would add to the kindness he had already shown by sending for a cab, and by allowing him to borrow the newspaper which he had been reading at the time of the attack; it should be carefully returned that afternoon. Mr. Walsingham, who was the soul of politeness, agreed to each of these requests; the cab was fetched, and Wilmot, with many thanks to his young friend, and with the packet for his young friend's mother, his own passport, and the *Morning Post* in his pocket, went away in it. Mr. Walsingham, who regarded this little episode in his monotonous life as quite an adventure, waxed very eloquent upon the subject afterwards to his friends, and made it his stock story for several

days. "Doosid awkward," he used to say, "to have a fellow, don't you know, who you don't know, don't you know, gone off into fits, and all that kind of thing! Here, too, of all places in the world! If he'd gone off in my rooms, you know, it wouldn't so much have mattered; but here, where old Blowhard"—for by this epithet Mr. Walsingham designated Sir Hercules Shandon, K.P., Her Britannic Majesty's Minister at the Court of Prussia—"where old Blowhard might have come in at any moment, don't you know, it might have been devilish unpleasant for a fellow. What he wanted with the *Post* I can't make out. I've looked through every column of it since he sent it back, but I can't find anything likely to upset a fellow like that. I thought at first he must have been sinking his fees in some city company that had bust-up, but there's no such thing in the paper; or that he'd read of some chap being poisoned in mistake, and that had come home to him, but there's nothing about that either. I can't make it out.—I say, Tollemache, do you see that Miss Kilsyth's married? Married to Caird, that

good-looking fellow that always used to be there at Brook-street—tame cat in the house—and that used to—you know—Adalbert Villa, Omicron-road, eh? Sell for you, old boy; you were very hard hit in that quarter, weren't you, Tolly?"

So Chudleigh Wilmot went back to his hotel in the cab; and the friendly waiter, who had seen him depart so full of life and joyousness, had to help him up the steps, and thought within himself that the great English doctor would have to seek the assistance of other members of his craft. But no bodily illness had struck down Chudleigh Wilmot; he had not recovered his full strength, and the shock to his nerves had been a little too strong—that was all. So soon as he found himself alone, after refusing the friendly waiter's offer of sending for a physician, of getting him restoratives of a kind which came specially within the resources of the *Hôtel de Russie*, such as a roast chicken and a bottle of sparkling Moselle, and after dispensing with all further assistance or companionship, Wilmot locked the door of his room, and sat down at the table with the newspaper spread open before