

**THE ABDUCTION; OR, THE  
ADVENTURES OF MAJOR  
SARNEY: A STORY OF THE TIMES  
OF CHARLES THE SECOND; IN  
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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The Abduction; or, The adventures of Major Sarney: a story of the times of Charles the Second;  
in three volumes, Vol. II by Anonymous

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VOL. II.

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# THE ABDUCTION.

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## CHAPTER I.

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Queen Anne is lately dead of a dropsy in Denmark-house, which is held to be one of the fatal events which followed the last fearful Comet.—*Howell's Letters.*

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Soon after the apprehension of the conspirators, whose daring designs upon the life of the Duke of Ormond and the Castle of Dublin had been so opportunely frustrated, such of them as were deemed the most guilty were brought to trial for the crime of treason, or as the bills of indictment set forth, "for conspiring to levy war and surprise forts," when four were found guilty and executed. Of these, two had been Colonels, and one a Major in the Parliamentary army. The fourth was a fanatical preacher of the name of Zachary Lackie, who upon his

trial, as profound historians do aver, feigned himself mad. But as an imputation of so grave a character ought not to stain the memory of the defunct traitor, if unfounded, we deemed it our duty, for the information of the public, to investigate it with our wonted impartiality; and after perusing the Irish chronicles and state papers of that period, we give it as our sincere and conscientious opinion, that the unfortunate preacher, so far from having been guilty of *feigning* himself mad, was *non compos mentis* in reality.

Of those who escaped, Major Sarney, as the reader knows, was one, whose fortunes it is now requisite to follow a little further.

From the time of his arrival in London with the elder infant of Lord Macdonnell, he had chiefly resided with Father Venzani the jesuit, at his house in Austin Friars; and his time had been principally employed in endeavouring, through his influence with the Duke of Buckingham, to procure the king's pardon for his conduct in the Irish conspiracy, and the restitution of his estates in that kingdom.

Venzani was duly apprized of all the proceedings in Ireland as we have narrated them. He was informed of the frequent interviews of Sir Ludovic Kennedy with the object of his

affections—of the machinations of Workington and O'Gorman to defeat his intentions towards the Lady Mary—of the failure of their exertions—and to increase his mortification still more, he had been informed of the fatal result of the outrage upon Reynolds.

Each succeeding letter from his Irish emissaries contained gall and wormwood to his hopes. All their plans had been defeated. The stars seemed to fight against them; and the nearer their original project arrived at maturity, some unforeseen difficulty started up to mar it. A party of dragoons was now stationed at Tullybogue, another at Coolmaddy-chase; and a third, as if some clue had been obtained to their designs, was quartered at the Priory in the vicinity of Baldunaven castle.

What was now to be done? What fresh instructions were to be transmitted to Ireland? How could the aspiring scion of the Kennedies be removed? How could the Lady Dowager be gained over, and how could her daughter, who manifested such rebellious symptoms, be induced or compelled to second the wishes of her elder brother? These were the questions that flashed all at once over the brooding mind of the Jesuit, and they were questions too, on



the response to which the whole fabric of the plot rested.

Those who promoted the views of Father Gerald, the late Lord, never entertained a doubt that the possessions of the house of Macdonnell could only be secured in the way intended, either by the Lady Mary being espoused to one of her own faith, or by her taking the veil, and placing herself under the control of her elder brother, and those persons in whom he confided. True it was that the Lady Dowager had stated it as her intention to devote her daughter to religious seclusion; but the good Fathers did not know how far this resolve might be congenial to the sentiments of the intended devotee. It was also true that their schemes *might* be frustrated in the event of the death of Lady Louis Macdonnell, and the second marriage of his Lordship; and that the same result might follow the restoration of her Ladyship's health, or the discovery of the children. But these were occurrences which they were willing to hazard.

As a dernier expedient, Felix O'Gorman was fixed upon as the knight of the golden cross, who was to enter the tilt-yard and gain the prize. He was not only to woo but he was

to wed—not only to win the affections of the Lady Mary by superior gallantry, but he was to lay claim to his fair cousin's hand as his reward; and according to the rules of Connaught chivalry, his claim was to be seconded by all the influence of Lord Gerald, and such others of the Catholic nobility and clergy as had access to the Lady Dowager.

Felix, O! happy man, was the man after their own hearts. He was the pink of gallantry—the star of the morning—the beacon to the despairing and stray mariners—the dove with the olive leaf, that gave their hopes a resting-place. He grasped at the project with a celerity that showed how anxious he was to do God, the church, and himself, good service. Poor, proud, priest-ridden, and dependant—a gentleman and an esquire without a rood of land—a Milesian, in whose veins mantled the blood of kings Ollam Fodlath and Brian Barromhe, but in whose purse a king's coin had rarely shone—a sort of monk secular, whose monastery was the castles, and whose altar tables and the firesides of the rich laity, he most readily joined in a scheme which he saw could not fail to prove advantageous to himself.

But upon what pretensions could Felix O'Gorman solicit the hand and the heart of the Lady

Mary? He had not only seldom seen her; but he was fortuneless, and unblessed with talents to gain one sufficient to maintain a wife in a humble sphere, much less in that rank to which by birth the Lady Mary was entitled. It is true that in the event of the estates of Lord Macdonnell falling into the possession of his intended bride, or her elder brother, her fortune would be ample, and his prospects surpassingly brilliant. But could this expectancy, far in the vista of futurity, be urged as an argument in favour of the union? Was the Lady Mary to be courted with her own reversionary dowry; and was he to gain her affections by reading her brother's last will, and pointing to his coronet at the matrimonial altar?

In this distressing dilemma—in this purgatory between passion and poverty—the practicability of recovering his uncle's forfeited estate came to be considered. O'Gorman, as well as Venzani, knew the value of a golden shower; and they conceived that this property, if restored, would be a powerful charm to hold up to the affections of his fair cousin in the one hand, while he offered her his heart with the other. Hence came the exemplification of the Latin adage on the person and hereditaments of Walter Reynolds—“*Qui jacet in terram, non habet*