

**A LIFE'S HAZARD; OR, THE
OUTLAW OF
WENTWORTH WASTE, IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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A life's hazard; or, the outlaw of Wentworth Waste, In Three Volumes, Vol. II by Henry Esmond

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HENRY ESMOND

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A LIFE'S HAZARD;

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CHAPTER I.

“HAVE I interfered with your interesting occupation?” inquired Vincent Darecourt, of the cowering Brien Flynn.

“Indade, sir, I wor only attindin’ an Mither—”

“I do not wish to hear what you were doing,” interposed the heir of Darecourt, “although you looked confoundedly alarmed, for no visible reason except that you saw me.”

The agent’s natural composure was fast returning: “Well, ye see, sir, as how I

thought ye wor in England, an' 'tis no wondher I grew frightind like; bud Mистер Vincent, didn't ye meet the other gintleman, Mистер—"

"I met no person, nor do I wish to see any one but my father," he interposed, in a petulant tone, adding, "Where is Lord Darecourt at present?"

"His Lordship's in the ould oak room to the lift, where he ginerally sits at this time, but av ye plaze, sir, I'll show ye the door."

"No, no, thanks; I will find my way without your assistance. Who receives the letters from the post?" This question was asked very abruptly, completely throwing Flynn off his guard.

"I do," replied the agent.

"Do you also post them?"

"I do, yer honour."

"At all times?"

“Yis, Misther Vincent.”

“Are you certain there is no one else entrusted with this office?”

“No wan, I alone hould the kay for lockin’ or anlockin’ the post-bag.”

“Thank you, that is all I wish to know,” responded the young heir, leaving the room.

“Oh me sthars,” pondered Flynn, “havn’t I sed an unlucky thing about thim litters; shure now they’ll know who inthersiptid thim, bad scran to me misforthin. Oh dear, oh dear.”

Vincent Darecourt’s repeated knock at the door of his father’s apartment being still unanswered, he turned the handle softly and letting himself in stood facing the Lord of Darecourt, who was fast asleep.

What agitating thoughts came to that observer from the clouded past. A dim

remembrance of having seen that face when there were none of those time freighted lines rendering it so severe; when also another of soft benevolence was linked with the picture, the form of his mother growing up on the green page of memory. But now this unconscious sleeper alone remained, and Vincent thought, does the departed keep watch over the one left behind in his declining years, or can she know that her only child is here to wake a father's listless heart to duty if not affection?

Oblivious of being the subject of so much thought and speculation, the prematurely aged Lord Darecourt still dozed and dreamed.

There was the maid of his choice, noble born, and looking nobility in her every lineament and deportment, as, accompanied by a large retinue, she stands