

THE LORDS OF HIGH DECISION

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON

CHAPTER XVI.—Continued.

The Trip to Boston.

In his fresh access of loyalty to his husband she excused and justified his conduct in shutting himself up to prepare his address; very like-

she entered the coffee and sent the maid away, to prolong the mood of the hour. The quiet service, the sub-

stant appointments of the room, the realization that she bore the hon-

ored name of the man who faced her contributed to her happiness. It was pleasant to be Mrs. Craighill; she was enjoying her position in the

thousand ways possible to her nature. The stir of the clerks in the show-

room and the appearance of the whispered interest her presence occasioned any-

where she was, indeed, Mrs. Craighill, and everyone was anxious to

leave her. To be sought first by those persons who are forever seeking vic-

office, that he had really begun to take an interest in business.

"He's a boy of moods, poor Wayne! Just now he's going to the office every day. His cleverness is amaz-

ing when he applies himself; but let a new kind of motor catch his eye and off he goes! He's struck a

new humor lately—devoting himself to the study of a lot of most com-

plexed legal matters—contracts and the like. Such things are best left

to the lawyers. But he has kept straight for some time and that's something. It's a good deal, and I'm grateful for it. I have always

let him do as he pleased at the office in the hope that he would some day find something that interested him."

"He's very bright—and likable," said Mrs. Craighill. "Fanny says he's a genius."

"Fanny can see no wrong in her brother, and I'm glad of it; but she has kept me ignorant of many of his worst escapades and I have simply never been able to get near him. We are very unlike."

"Isn't that strange! I've been thinking that in so many ways you and he are much alike."

"Physically, yes; he has my build. I rather fancy that I'm still as erect as he is!"

He smiled and waited for her acquiescence but she had been thinking intently and did not at once meet his eyes.

"They had rarely spoken of Wayne; it could hardly be said that they avoided mentioning him; but his life was outside theirs; his sleeping in the house and eating one meal a day with them left him a tolerated ten-

ant whose ways it was wiser not to question. Mrs. Craighill observed with interest that her husband seemed willing to take credit for his son's admirable physical proportions, but that his paternal pride stopped there. Her attitude toward her husband was so wholly sympathetic tonight that she saw Wayne with his eyes. It must indeed be a grievous thing to

have lived an honorable life, to have made a place for one's self and to find both name and position brought low by a profligate son.

"Fanny is very happy," continued Col. Craighill. "John is a splendid fellow—steady as a rock, and with high ideals. A woman like Fanny needs such a man to check her ex-

uberances."

"Oh, she's most delightful and she has certainly been kind to me! She might have made it hard for me if she had wanted to."

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Wingfield!" cried Addie; "he talks to me only of pictures and music. I can't imagine him watching men pound each other."

"Why should he work merely to please his critics? If he took a job, it would throw somebody else out. What would you have him do?" Wayne demanded.

"Our rich young men have had too much notoriety; they have brought scandal upon the city!" ejaculated Col. Craighill wrathfully and with unmistakable application. "You oughtn't to believe all you see in the yellow papers. Besides, Dick's about the dearest man I ever knew. He doesn't pretend to sole ownership in all the virtues. That's why I like him so well."

"When do you head for the Hub, Addie?" Wayne asked. "It's tomorrow night, isn't it, Roger?" "Yes; tomorrow evening," answered Col. Craighill reaching for a magazine. "Dick and I spend only a few days assailing the impenetrable fastnesses of the Philadelphia mind. Is there anything special coming up, father?" "Nothing out of the usual run. I think Gregory may come in, but you needn't trouble about him. Tell him I'll see him when I come back."

"He was in today, now that I think of it," remarked Wayne, thrusting his hands into his pockets, "and worked an hour for you."