

you be ready to catch her. I'm afraid if I tried I should let her down, and it would look so bad before the servants."

"Be too heavy for you, eh, gov'nor?" said Tom, grinning, as he mentally conjured up the scene.

"Yes, my boy, yes. She has grown so much stouter and heavier, and I have grown thinner and lighter since—since the happy day twenty-six years ago when I married her, Tom—when I married her. Yes, much stouter since I married her. How well I remember it all. Yes: it was an easterly wind, I recollect, and your poor dear mamma—her ladyship, Tom—had the toothache very badly. It made her face swell out on one side as we went across to Paris, and I had a deal of bother to get the waiter and chamber-maid to understand what a linseed-meal poultice was. Very objectionable thing a linseed-meal poultice; I never did like the smell."

"I should think not," said the son, watching his father seriously, the old man having a worn look, as if he had been engaged in a severe struggle with time.

"Peculiarly faint odor about them. Seems only last night, and now one girl going to be married—her ladyship looking out for a rich husband for the other. Er—er—does my wig look all right, Tom?" he continued, patting his head as he turned towards a mirror.

The speaker, who was a very thin, highly-dilapidated old gentleman of sixty-five, heaved a deep sigh, and then bent down to softly rub his right leg.

"Spiff," replied Viscount Diphoos, a dapper little boyish fellow of four-and-twenty, most carefully