

heart-warm manners, (the sunshine that lighted up the whole face of her nature,) I have never beheld as they existed in Emily Montagu. She was more the creature of dreams than what you might hope to meet with in actual embodiment.

I introduced my friend. He was now himself again, and did his part well. On our adieu, we received a pressing invitation to dine that day at the Villa Nuovo, which they were occupying for the season.

"I have come abroad," said the colonel, "for a little while, because the physicians tell me it is a duty I owe my girl to prop up this tottering tenement so long as I can. We see no company, so come early; I have a thousand questions to ask you, John. Farewell, Mr. Harley."

"Well! dear chuck," said I, as on our return we gaily ran up the inn stairs together, "I'll always believe you to be a bit of a wizard after this. Thomas of Ercildoune, they say, could raise the dead, but you seem to possess spells to conjure up the living."

"Jack, Jack," he replied, "'tis all but a vision."

"No! I warrant you she is there in flesh and blood; but how handsome she is. I wonder I did not know her at once. She is not much changed; and Harley, you're a lucky dog. Never was man before so blessed in his acquaintance. A votive shrine is the least you can give my memory when I've done with this breathing world. Come, come, all perils are now over at least—"

"Now begun," said he, smilingly. "But was not my finding her here, a thousand miles away, a marvel? Jack, you seem to know all about them; for our friendship's sake let me hear it. Come, I am all impatience—Montagu, is not that the name?" and here he gabbled in a delightfully incoherent manner.

"Do, dear Jack," he continued, "let me have all. You are not disposed to be unkind. Could you read my heart, you would know that its every pulsation is hers. But who is she—what is she? and the old father—what about him?"

"If you will only let me answer you one question at a time, or tell the tale in my own way, I am satisfied to impart it all to you. There, pull over that trunk, you can sit on it; or—I did not see it before—here's a seat; now, *asseyez-vous, mon cher*. You are very right, the name is Montagu."

"And the other?"

"Emily."

"Where do they live?"

"Nay, nay, I'll not be catechised. You must allow me to speak as I will, or not at all. May I trouble you to take that cravat from me? Thank you: now, give me the towel—thanks. How blunt these razors are. I say, Harley, have you any at your place over the way, wherever it is; do run, like a good fellow, for them. You will not be long, and we have a clear hour and a half yet; or if you will, I'll send Paolo for them."

I cannot be malicious long, nor do I much laud your provoking practical jokers; still—as it is the truth I shall confess it—I dearly love for a while, a little *tease*. Harley was eyes and soul waiting to drink in every syllable I should let fall, for which reason I was grudging of each word; had he been quiet, he would have heard it outright, for my babbling tongue would have run it over immediately for him; but now, do what my better nature would to the contrary, I could not resist a little raillery.

"Well, will you get me the razors, and you shall hear every word of it? Tush, man, never mind her; beside, you have no chance, if she possess any taste I know whither she will turn in preference."

But when I beheld his forlorn mortified countenance, I forbore; he was so silent, and took it all so patiently, and seemed so to understand my pleasantry, and to wait till it was over, that I gave up the ungracious task at once, or, I should rather say, with an occasional interruption.

"You shall hear it all, Harley. Are you acquainted with the road from town to Canterbury?"

"Yes, I have gone it a dozen times."

"Ah! now we are getting to it. I wonder do they supply any hot water in this establishment—must do without it, *n'importe*—there, I've cut myself, all through your means, Harley."

"But about Canterbury?"

"Yes—yes! I was on the high road to it when you stopped me. You remember the little village of Ashton; it is midway between Chatham and the Kentish capital—eh? and those lofty elm trees that skirt the road for some miles; and the high Elizabethan gables and countless chimneys you get a peep of from the coach-roof, they must have struck you. Ashton belongs to the Montagus, and Ashton-hall has been their residence for centuries."

"You know, Harley—but you don't know, for I never told you—that my father occupied, at one time, a high political post in India, under Cornwallis; he there met Colonel Montagu. They had been friends in Europe, they now became brothers in another hemisphere. The colonel's first wreath was won at the storming of the Mysore Sultaun's capital. His subsequent brilliant career I have no time to relate, you will read of it in the despatches. When, heart-broken from the early loss of his wife, and worn out by care, and the climate, and fatigues, my poor parent died at Travancore, his friend was beside him when he drew his last breath and received from him, as a sacred legacy, his boy, to whom he vowed to be as a father."

"Nobly he redeemed his promise. Unlike many around him, my father disdaining speculation in any shape, had lived an honest man, and I suppose in consequence died a poor one. His effects, what they were, were converted into money, and invested in his orphan's name. Nay, more: recollecting that I had in England a wealthy uncle, this more than friend prepared to take me to him, hoping that, as he was childless, he might adopt and make me his heir."

"Everything had been arranged for the voyage, when a letter reached him with the news that he was now possessor of the Montagu estates. His elder brother, under the excitement of the chase, leaped a six-foot wall, which was his last leap, for horse and rider were found dead on the other side. He had led a bachelor life, and left none to mourn him. There was a frigid pompous funeral; mourning coaches came from all the country round; the village church was clad in black; a glowing sermon was pronounced by the family parson, and all was over."

"A happy time I had of it at the hall on our return: that is, before my uncle had determined whether he would receive me or not. How many days have I spent under those noble park trees, or gone a-nutting in the woods with the old butler! It was from feelings of duty, and regarding the right of so near a relative as sacred, that the colonel made application to him; and I am satisfied he would have rejoiced the more had I been left altogether with him."

"You have now the whole story, Harley. Miss Montagu I have not seen for eight or ten years, nor do I think I should have known her in other company than her father's; yet you saw how kindly she saluted me. Go on and prosper; if ever girl had a warm devoted heart it is Emily."

We were interrupted by the noise of heavy feet and the bumping of ponderous articles of furniture against the walls, as they moved them up the stairs.

"Hillo! new arrivals I suppose?"

Harley looked out.

"No, only my luggage; I bid them bring it here, and they are only now removing it. Thanks, thanks, evermore, Jack. I must now, as fast as I can, make my toilet. When you have finished come up to me."

Half an hour saw me viewing myself very complacently in the large mirror, and another thirty minutes Harley and myself in a one-horse cabriolet moving along towards the Villa Nuovo. Our vetturino I had directed to be in readiness, and, to do him justice, he gave us no more than the usual amount of delay. At first he kept to the same route which we had taken in our walk; then diverged from it; then by some crossing road returned to it; and at last, to our amazement, pulled up in front of the villa, in the grounds of which we had sat down to rest.

"Mystery of mysteries!" said my companion, "where will all this perplexing wonderment end?"

(To be continued.)