

HER FANCY AND HIS FACT 433

the sorrow of her end—and these were Lord Blythe, Miss Leigh and Robin Clifford. Yet even these said nothing, restrained by the thought of casting the smallest scandal on the sweet lustre of her name. And Amadis de Jocelyn himself?—had he no regret?—no pity? If the truth must be told, he was more relieved than pained,—more flattered than sorry! The girl had died for him,—well!—that was more or less a pleasing result of his power! She was a silly child—obsessed by a “fancy”—it was not his fault if he could not live up to that “fancy”—he liked “facts.” His picture of her was the success of the Salon that year, and he was admired and congratulated,—this was enough for him.

“One of your victims, Amadis?” asked a vivacious society woman he knew, critically studying the portrait on the first day of its exhibition.

He nodded, smilingly.

“Really? And yet—Innocent?”

He nodded again.

“Very much so! She is dead!”

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Sorrow and joy, strangely intermingled, divided the last years of life for good Miss Leigh. The shock of the loss and death of the girl to whom she had become profoundly attached, followed by the startling discovery that her old lover Pierce Armitage was alive, proved almost too much for her frail nerves—but her gratitude to God for the joy of seeing the beloved face once again, and hearing the beloved voice, was so touching and sincere that Armitage, smitten to the heart by the story of her long fidelity and her tenderness for his forsaken daughter, offered to marry her, earnestly praying her to let him share life with her to the end. This she gently refused,—but for the rest of her days she—with him and Lord Blythe—made a trio of