

*Malaprop*, pointing a derisive finger at her fair companion, "there stands the deliberate simpleton who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling."

Reine (as *Lydia Languish*): Madame, I thought you once——"

*Mrs. Malaprop*: "You thought, miss! I don't know what business you had to think at all! thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory."

Longworth glances at Reine, his smile fading. He is thinking of Durand—the words seem to apply. Perhaps Reine is also, for the pathos of her tone is very real as she answers;

"Ah! madam, our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget."

*Mrs. M.*: "But I say it is, miss. There is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed, and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, *Lydia*, these violent memories don't become a young woman."

Here there is some gentle applause from the window. Miss Harriott delivers this speech as if she meant it.

"Madam," says *Lydia*, still pathetically, "what crime have I committed to be treated thus?"

"Will you promise to do as you are bid?" demands *Mrs. Malaprop*, severely.

"Will you take a husband of your friend's choosing?"

"Madam," responds *Lydia*, emphatically, and casts a defiant glance at the window, "I must tell you plainly that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion."

"And what business have you, miss," cries *Mrs. Malaprop*, in a fine fury, "with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman, and you ought to know that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little aversion."

"Lorry," says the speaker, descending from the heights of *Malaprop* to be Miss Harriott once more, "come in if you want to. 'I can't do myself justice

with you looking on, and, besides, *Lydia* doesn't half know her lines. Take your book, miss, and go study. Let me tell you it does not become a young woman to only half know her lesson."

Reine laughs, picks up her book, and disappears. Longworth enters, and takes his customary chair.

"Where is Mrs. Dexter?" he asks.

For two days before Mrs. Dexter has arrived in Baymouth, as per promise, and is Miss Harriott's guest.

"Gone to call upon Mrs. Windsor. Like the best and most obedient of little mothers, she has fallen in love with Marie because her big boy has told her to do so. She sings her praises until I grow idiotic listening. She is the prettiest creature the sun shines on—so gentle, so sweet, so affectionate, and, as Mrs. Windsor's heiress, a fitting match even for Longworth's heir. Laurence"—she lays down the work she has taken up, and looks at him earnestly—"I wonder if that unfathomable girl means to marry poor Frank?"

"Can she do better?"

"No-o; and she doesn't seem the kind to have had prior attachments. I think, if the lovely Marie were vivisected, her heart might be put in a filbert shell. Reine, self-willed, perverse, hot-tempered, is worth a thousand of her. She has a heart of gold for him who is able to win it."

"Ah, but the winning is such uncommonly uphill work!" says Longworth, lazily, but with an amused look in his eyes; "and the question that naturally presents itself to an inquiring mind is—is the game worth the candle?"

"The man who could ask such a question——" begins Miss Harriott, vehemently. Then she stops and takes up her work. "I won't say another word," she exclaims. "You are ready to sit there and abuse her for the next hour for the pleasure of hearing, me contradict you. I won't do it!"

Longworth laughs and silence falls. Outside the faint sea-breeze stirs among the September flowers, bees boom in "wave-swung lilies and wind-swung roses," the sharp crack of the grasshopper pierces the hot, dry grass.

Reine appears to have totally vanished. The day is the day so long expected, so much talked of, and to night Bay-