

should you have thought of me if I'd been as unselfish as Esther, and begged Tammy to go further and fare worse in the clutches of some idiotic woman who was four times as good-looking as I, and not a quarter as clever? It would have made life dreadfully dull for him: and it would have been most unfair to the boys, too, to give them a fool for a mother, instead of brilliant, sensible me. Think how stupid they might have been, with Tammy's solid stodge, and none of my wit to lighten it!"

"Ah, there you have it, my love!" said Lady Westerham: "you have put your finger on the core of the matter, when you talk of the boys. Think of Win."

"Yes, of course, there's the child," admitted the Duchess grudgingly.

"Perhaps dear Esther did make a mistake," continued her mother; "but if so, she did it from the best motives, and she is certainly among those loving ones for whom it is written that all things work together for good. We may tangle the threads of life through our ignorance and clumsiness; but if we only err through ignorance and clumsiness, and not by evil intention, there is One Who will take the tangled threads out of our tired hands and weave them into a perfect pattern of palm-leaves and cherubim and open flowers. It makes me very happy to think that Esther and Wilfred are to be married at last: but it makes me still happier to think that the name and the family will not die out, but that dear little Win will carry them on and be as good a man, please God, as his father and your father have been before him."

The Duchess shrugged her shoulders. "Mamma,

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