

Let Not Man Put Asunder

"But I never thought it would come to this."

"I never thought it would come to anything else. A husband and wife who protest that they don't love each other are going in one sure direction."

"But it seemed in fun."

"A sort of fun that is likely to turn into earnest."

"But Emmy was fond of him—"

"Once, undoubtedly; and he of her. But the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in have choked their love. It has not become precisely unfruitful, for they have three children. Emmy doesn't say what is to become of them in the dividing of the inheritance?"

"Yes, she does. Here is what she writes: 'I have deferred this step, dear Petrina, until Tristram should be old enough to go to Eton. That takes care of him; for what with school and college, and then the army or the navy, a boy has no need of a home after he has reached Tristram's age. Hippolyta is going to her grandmother. Of course I shall miss her, but the dowager is wild to have her. Then she is such a strange girl! She doesn't understand me, and now that she is seventeen she begins to act for herself in a way which puzzles me. The baby I mean to keep, at least for the present—that is, if Humphrey won't take him. He threatens to do so, and, if he insists, I shall let him. He has already broken my heart. One sorrow more or less in such a load as mine would count for little.'"

"With most people a baby counts for a good deal," said Mrs. Faneuil, dryly.

"Emmy never had much of the maternal sense."

"She never had much sense of any kind."

"She is certainly very clever, mamma."

"Clever? Yes, perhaps. But cleverness and common-sense are two very different things, my dear."