

the fool. Let me keep it, for indeed, there will never again be song or jest for me if you send me away."

She was silent. She could not say what was in her mind for her heart spoke so loudly.

"I shall be only your fool, if you will have it so, but I shall be happy being near you."

"You have been watching me," she said. "How long have you been watching me?"

"I have not been watching."

"You saw me standing by the fountain."

"You were standing there when I saw you."

"Do you know why I was looking into the fountain?" she asked.

"How can I know, mistress?"

"I was looking at a fool's ideal," she whispered, "and to-morrow —"

"There is a sob in your voice, mistress."

"Maurice."

In a moment he was kneeling at her feet, and he raised the hem of her gown to his lips.

"So I knelt when you made me a fool, now mistress do with me what you will."

"Maurice, to-morrow I must choose a husband. I thought to be unhappy all my life after to-morrow. Will you help me to be happy?"

She stood up, tall, stately, beautiful in the moonlight. Her hand rested on his bowed head for a moment. Then he stood before her, her hands in his.

"All my life I will strive to give you happiness," he said.

"Must I confess as I confessed to Bergolet? Maurice, we must go quickly. They must know at once that you have come, that to-morrow —"

He held her hands.

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