

The day came when Fay was suddenly and adroitly confronted with the fact that she must marry him, or lose him.

Many confirmed bachelors who openly regret that they have never come across a woman to whom they cared to tie themselves for life, might be in a position to descant on the inability of wives to enter into their husbands' inmost feelings, if only they—the bachelors—had known on a past occasion how to act with sudden promptitude on the top of patience.

The duke played the waiting game, and then hit hard. He had coolly allowed himself to be trifled with, until the moment arrived when it did not suit him to be trifled with any longer.

The marriage had not proved a marked success, nor an entire failure. The duke was an irreproachable husband, but, like many men who marry when they are no longer young, he aged suddenly after marriage. He quickly became bald and stout. His tact, except in these two particulars, remained flawless. He never allowed his deep chagrin to appear when, three years after his marriage, he still remained without a son to continue his historic name. He was polite to his wife at all times, mildly sarcastic as to her extravagance; Fay was not exorbitantly extravagant, but then the duke was not exorbitantly rich. One of Fay's arts, as unconscious as that of a kitten, was to imply past unhappiness, spoken of with a cheerful resignation which greatly endeared her to others—and to herself. The duke had understood that she had not had a very happy home, and he had honestly endeavoured to make her new home happy. In the early days of his marriage he made many small experiments in the hope of pleasing the pretty creature who had