

know that you are so near to me again. I shall not call till I hear from you, as I would rather not run the risk of meeting you for the first time in the presence of strangers. Warren retired about five years ago. We have to live very quietly, as our income is so small; but fortunately Madge, our only child, has several pupils for drawing and music, and so makes enough to maintain herself comfortably. Do you, dear Arabella, appoint an early day and hour for me to bring my only child to my only sister. With our united love to the Admiral and yourself, believe me to be your affectionate sister,

MARGARET WARREN."

"It's hideous that they should be settled here! It's unwarrantable impertinence on Margaret's part to presume on her relationship and try and foist her gawky daughter on us!" Lady Petres cried, excitedly, putting the letter into Bella's hand.

When that true daughter of her mother had read it through carefully, she asked:

"What does the Admiral say?"

"I haven't spoken to him about it yet."

"Don't speak to him about it, mamma. Write and tell Mrs. Warren that you can't ask her here, as we are always surrounded by officers and people, but that we will go and see her some day soon. It would be awful for me to be hampered by a cousin who teaches in the place."

"Simply intolerable!" Lady Petres put in.

"Especially now that Mr. Deane is likely to be here so much. The girl who teaches drawing and music would be sure to make up to him, and try to monopolize him, as he has very artistic tastes."

"Exactly so. I will do as you advise, Bella. I never heard such selfish assurance in my life!" Lady Petres said, almost choking with the indignation which was caused by the picture her daughter had conjured up on the canvas of her suspiciously foreboding mind. "The idea," she went on, when she had recovered her breath, "of your aunt Margaret expecting that we could devote ourselves to them before we are settled in the place! She is showing herself as selfish as she was years ago when she would marry Mr. Warren, though I implored her to pause and consider. He never had a penny in his pocket, or a grain of energy to get him on in the service."

Well, neither of those facts concern us so they needn't annoy you," said Bella, philosophically. Then she went back to the drawing-room, where she sang to and at Mr. Deane till the arrival of callers and afternoon tea put an end to what she considered a most promising tête-à-tête.

Meanwhile Lady Petres answered her sister's letter in a way that effectually crushed out those little enthusiastic hopes of happiness in the reunion which Mrs. Warren had so fallaciously indulged in when first she heard of the appointment of the new admiral.

However, as her husband abstained from remarking that he told her so, and fresh interests exclusively concerning Madge shortly arose to claim her attention, Mrs. Warren speedily forgot her chagrin at Lady Petres' attitude of hostility.

(To be Continued.)

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