

The watch-dog's bay, glancing lights in the windows, the hurrying footsteps of the servants, and the clang of opening doors heralded their arrival. A few rapid directions from Delaval, and the troopers' nags clamped noisily round to the courtyard; then he turned, and was about to do the honors of the house to the brother and sister. But to his disgust—for he had promised himself no small solace in playing lord of the manor to his prisoner guests—he found he was anticipated by his young kinsman, who, with the fair Madeline on his arm, and her brother by his side, swept by, taking not the smallest notice of the chagrined Frenchman.

Leading the way across the octagonal hall, the young heir bade fling open the folding doors of a roomy parlor, where a fire of sea-coal, lit in consideration of the damp evening air, threw around a comfortable glow. Summoning the housekeeper, the youth ordered the best chambers to be prepared forthwith for his guests. Marvelling not a little, the old lady led Madeline to her apartment, whilst Calvert himself escorted his friend Harvey to his room. Having repaired in some measure the disorder of his toilet, the youth excused himself, and hastened with anxious solicitude to visit his suffering parent.

The shaded lights and curtains close drawn, with the occasional moaning of the patient, told he was worse, even without the cautioning glance and uplifted fore-finger of Marie, who, it seemed, had constituted herself chief nurse. Comfortably disposed in an easy-chair drawn up to the warm blaze that leaped up from the polished bars of the grate, a hand-screen shading her face, that young lady seemed quite an adept in the art of uniting the useful with the agreeable.

To Calvert's surprise, all remembrance of the provocation he had offered when last they parted, seemed to be banished from his cousin's mind. At least, if remembered at all, it was only with that angelic forbearance and that forgiving smile which are woman's favorite weapons of defence, and notably of *offence*. I say the last advisedly; for of all feminine artillery, forgiveness without forgetfulness is the most dreaded and abhorred by man.

In presence of that smile the poor youth trembled, felt himself overwhelmed with ignominy, consigned at once to the criminal's dock, in a moment enduring tortures of self-reproach enough to have satisfied his bitterest enemy.