

THE SQUIRE'S MODEL.

"Mr. Hayward, I hear, is going to execute a splendid statue for the Burwood exhibition in October. Gillingham and I were joking him about it the other day, and asking him who his model would be, and he blushed like a boy of eighteen. He would not tell us, but I think we know who it will be—eh, Gertrude?" and Lady Mercia laughed archly, as she turned to her younger sister, a superb beauty, fully aware of her own loveliness.

"I wish you would not be so ready to couple my name with Cuthbert Hayward's," answered the Lady Gertrude, pettishly; "people will think we are engaged, and it will spoil all my chances for the season."

"Well, do as you please, dear. Only he is of old, though unfitted family, and immensely rich; and the youngest daughter of a poor earl may live to rue the day she slighted him," was the elder sister's plain-spoken reply.

"Mamma does not agree with you, Mercia; she thinks I ought to certainly secure a title; if I fail, then I may, perhaps, accept Mr. Hayward, as I should not care to risk another season."

The sisters were sitting in a pretty rustic arbor in the grounds of Grey-stone Hall, and talking confidentially. Lady Gillingham and her husband were guests for the present; the former, being happily married, was generously anxious to see the younger sister similarly circumstanced; but Gertrude was quite unlike the warm-hearted Mercia. She was cold-hearted, selfish, and calculating, and had neither love nor admiration for any man, except for his title and position.

The sisters had thought themselves alone in the grounds, but as Gertrude finished speaking, a gentleman, tall, handsome, and more aristocratic in appearance than many a duke, arose from a little mound where stood a marble fountain, close to, but hidden from the arbor, and with a bitter smile on his lips, walked quickly away.

It was Cuthbert Hayward. He was honestly and truly in love with Lady Gertrude, and her last speech, unintentionally overheard, was a cruel awakening from his dream of happiness.

He had intended her to be his model; in his youth he had been passionately fond of the sculptor's art, and it was still the favorite amusement of his leis-

ure hours, and since he had met the earl's lovely daughter, a great desire to immortalize her perfect features in pure white marble had taken possession of him, and he had resolved that, as the Burwood Exhibition was to be held in the autumn, he would execute for it a beautiful statue of his love, and when it was closed, the statue would fill an honored place in his ancestral gallery. And then, too, he fondly thought, its lovely original might also find a lasting home at Hayward Lodge.

Now his dream was rudely shattered. He had come forth from his home that bright spring morning, a happy lover; he returned two hours later, a blighted, disappointed man.

"So," he thought bitterly, "my Lady Gertrude will flirt, and dance, and hunt, with her worldly minded mother's aid, for a title through one more London season, and then, if no noble lord or duke is caught, poor, insignificant Cuthbert Hayward may claim the prize! Thank you; but your ladyship may chance to find that you have but rehearsed in reality the famous fable of the dog and the shadow. The statue shall be sculptured to the best of my poor ability, but the false face of Lady Gertrude will not be my model."

So he wrought at his block of marble, and with every chip of the chisel, with every blow of his hammer, his bitterness of spirit increased, and his determination never to marry, never again to look with love on the face of woman, became stern and fixed.

"Elma," said Lady Gertrude, one day, to an orphan cousin who lived with them, "do you know I used to think Cuthbert Hayward a perfect bear, no other gentleman was half so gracefully attentive as he; now, he has quite altered, he is a worse bear than that old Churchill whom we all hate."

Elma's soft gray eyes opened wide with surprise.

"How can you think so, Gertrude? Why, I always think him so kind, so thoughtful, and——"

"Oh, of course I quite forgot you had set him up as your *beau idéal*, Elma. Perhaps you would like to marry him yourself, eh? Well, if an eligible suitor comes my way when we go to London next month, I'll turn him over to you!"

Elma's eyes filled with tears, and a painful blush suffused her cheeks.

"You are very cruel to talk so, Gertrude, and you do not deserve the love