

was wicked; and when she had been closely pressed by Mr. Havisham's questions about her marriage and her boy, she had made one or two blunders which had caused suspicion to be awakened; and then she had lost her presence of mind and her temper, and in her excitement and anger had betrayed herself still further. All the mistakes she made were about her child. There seemed no doubt that she had been married to Bevis, Lord Fauntleroy, and had quarreled with him and had been paid to keep away from him; but Mr. Havisham found out that her story of the boy's being born in a certain part of London was false; and just when they all were in the midst of the commotion caused by this discovery, there came the letter from the young lawyer in New York, and Mr. Hobbs's letters also.

What an evening it was when those letters arrived, and when Mr. Havisham and the Earl sat and talked their plans over in the library!

"After my first three meetings with her," said Mr. Havisham, "I began to suspect her strongly. It appeared to me that the child was older than she said he was, and she made a slip in speaking of the date of his birth and then tried to patch the matter up. The story these letters bring fits in with several of my suspicions. Our best plan will be to cable at once for these two Tiptons,—say nothing about them to her,—and suddenly confront her with them when she is not expecting it. She is only a very clumsy plotter, after all. My opinion is that she will be frightened out of her wits, and will betray herself on the spot."

And that was what actually happened. She was told nothing, and Mr. Havisham kept her from suspecting anything by continuing to have interviews with her, in which he assured her he was investigating her statements; and she really began to feel so secure that her spirits rose immensely and she began to be as insolent as might have been expected.

But one fine morning, as she sat in her sitting-room at the inn called "The Dorincourt Arms," making some very fine plans for herself, Mr. Havisham was announced; and when he entered, he was followed by no less than three persons—one was a sharp-faced boy and one was a big young man and the third was the Earl of Dorincourt.

She sprang to her feet and actually uttered a cry of terror. It broke from her before she had time to check it. She had thought of these new-comers as being thousands of miles away, when she had ever thought of them at all, which she had