

divined what I had come to say. I said, "I suppose I must take your words as a proof of your sisterly friendship for me, otherwise they are hardly polite."

"Oh, I beg your pardon." She turned her eyes to me with a look of innocent pleading. "I did not mean to be rude; I really was not thinking what I said, I was only telling you what he was like."

Had this been true it certainly would not have detracted from the rudeness of her words, but I knew too well that the innocence was feigned. "If he was at all like me, he must have been uninteresting indeed," I said dryly. "Perhaps you will kindly favour me with the list of your requirements in a young man."

"Six feet two—and a beard—musical—and a Christian," replied Annabel, telling off the four items upon her fingers with a moment's pause for reflection before each.

If I had expected any answer to my question, it was a further apology, and I was so much astonished by her prompt category that I stood aghast. Annabel