

'Everything,' I replied. 'He took me to the house.'

'It must have been a mistake on his part,' observed Harry, 'though he certainly knows the place.'

But I knew that individual too well to give him the benefit of so charitable a doubt; and after requesting Harry not to speak of the matter; I finished dressing and followed him down stairs.

At my particular request I was placed at Helen's end of the table, as I could endure Madame McMahon's propinquity no longer. For being compelled to sit tongue-tied at every meal—the pale young lady on my right, in the meantime not having made the slightest response to my first advance, and Harry being compelled to be all ears—I simply felt to be no longer endurable.

After taking my seat, and exchanging the usual morning compliments with Mrs. Mowbray and Helen, the latter asked me if I had passed a pleasant evening.

'Well, no,' I answered quite thoughtlessly, 'I cannot say that I did altogether;' but the impoliteness of the reply flashing upon me the next moment, I made haste to flatly contradict myself by saying, 'Oh! yes! I meant to say that I did—that I had a delightful time.' My confusion could hardly have escaped their notice.

'And you doubtlessly thought Miss Morley exceedingly pretty and quite agreeable?' observed Helen, with a sly look at me.

'Oh! yes; very pretty indeed, and very agreeable,' I replied, blushing; 'you mean the—the elder sister, I presume?'

'I suppose I am the elder sister,' remarked Mrs. Mowbray, laughing, 'though I can hardly flatter myself that you intend the compliment for me.'

Confound my stupidity! I had put my foot in it again; and as these words were not calculated to restore my composure of mind to any very alarming extent, I said—as successful

extrication from my embarrassment this time seemed simply hopeless:

'The truth is, Mrs. Mowbray, I was not at your brother's house at all, last night. I will explain everything to Miss Mowbray after breakfast, as I wish her advice upon a certain matter.'

Helen regarded me with a somewhat surprised and curious look; but evidently observing that I appeared greatly embarrassed, she merely remarked, with a smile,

'Oh! certainly; I shall be happy to afford you the benefit of my sage counsels.' The conversation then changed to other topics.

During breakfast I ventured several glances towards Monsieur Mallet, but as the gravity of his countenance—once when he caught my eye—quite reassured me, I was encouraged to hope that he had not discovered those fish. De Villefort's eye I studiously avoided; I would take some other time and place to pay my respects to him.

Shortly after breakfast I observed Helen enter the library, and thinking it a favourable opportunity for my purpose, I was hurrying after her when I was intercepted by Mdlle de Clerval.

'Oh! Mr. Hastings!' she exclaimed, with one of her most bewitching smiles, 'I must remind you of your promise.'

'Ah; what promise is that?' I said, quite innocently.

'Fie, fie!' she exclaimed, with a charming air of mock reproof, 'you men are so unreliable. Have you forgotten already? I mean your promise to sing.'

Mdlle de Clerval spoke English quite faultlessly; she was extremely pretty; her manners were very fascinating, though decidedly coquettish, I thought; and she had a captivating way about her that was quite irresistible. So I only did, I suppose, what any other young fellow, who had not the moral courage to withstand her blan-