

self-possessed young person. What will Flora say? Merciful heaven, here she is!"

A portly, golden-headed woman, whose beauty was beginning to wane, stood motionless in the doorway. One hand was clutched in the shining satin folds of her dress, while with the other she held up an ostrich fan, over which her large blue eyes peered wrathfully at the girl's slim, graceful figure.

"Flora!" ejaculated Mr. Armour warningly.

The lady started, dropped her fan to her side, and burst into an hysterical laugh. "How you startled me! I did not know that there was a stranger present. Who is this young lady?"

"You know who she is," said Mr. Armour severely, while Mr. Valentine muttered wickedly, "Ananias and Sapphira."

"It is Miss Delavigne, I suppose," she replied peevishly; "but why did you not let us know that she was coming by this steamer? I was unprepared. How do you do?" and she extended her finger tips to Vivienne. "Did you have a good passage? You must have some tea. I will speak to the servants," and she disappeared.

In a few minutes she returned, a shining, sparkling vision, and quite mistress of herself. "I have spoken to the table maid; she will see that you are attended to. Will you excuse us if we leave you? We have an engagement for this evening, and I have to pick up a friend on the way."