

"Well, Graham," said Dering, when he had heard his friend's story, "there seems to me to be no reason why you should not order the wedding-breakfast at once, unless the young lady is a most heartless flirt. And now what is her name?"

"Her name is 'Beryl'—'Beryl Danvers.'"

"Ah, yes! I have heard that she is staying at the Priory; but I have not seen her."

"Can't you arrange a meeting between us somehow?"

"You are just in time. On the day after to-morrow Miss Capel gives a dance. I am invited; so of course you will come with me."

Leslie stood before the long mirror in her room fully dressed and ready for the dance. As she looked at her own reflection, she could not suppress a feeling of intense satisfaction. She saw a tall slim girl dressed in white silk with ostrich-feathers for trimming; her neck and arms were bare, the sleeves were caught up to the shoulder and fastened with small brooches set with opals and diamonds. She wore a narrow gold collar and bracelets set with precious stones. Beryl Danvers entered the room and stood speechless with amazement. She also looked her best. She had quite lost the terrible cough which had sounded so distressing, and, thanks to Leslie, was becoming quite strong. Leslie turned and laughed at the look of admiration on the face of her *protégée*.

"Do you admire my dress?" she asked.

"You look like an angel!" exclaimed Beryl.

So thought Graham Lynn as he followed Dering across the hall and saw Leslie through the open door receiving her guests. But why was Beryl Danvers receiving Miss Capel's guests? Why did every one pay court to her? Where was the hostess? These thoughts passed swiftly through the Captain's mind; but he did not feel very curious. It was enough for him that she was there—that the moment he longed for was at hand.

"Miss Capel, allow me to introduce my friend Captain Lynn to you."

They both stared and looked bewildered for a moment; then Graham, remembering how many people were looking on, asked Miss Capel if he might have the pleasure of dancing with her. Leslie's programme had been denied to many before; but she murmured "The sixth," and then turned to greet some one else.

Miss Capel made an exceedingly good hostess. When the sixth dance came, she had done her duty so well that she was able to give her whole attention to Graham Lynn.

"I want to speak to you alone," he said, in a low earnest tone. "Can you spare me ten minutes after the dance, or must we give it up?"

"I am afraid we must," said Leslie. "Come into the conservatory."

They passed through the now deserted hall; and as she entered the room leading to the conservatory, Leslie began to feel her confidence fast ebbing away as she wondered what he was going to say to her.

As she paused amid the banks of flowers in the conservatory, he was close beside her, longing to tell her how he loved her, but held back by the knowledge that it was Miss Capel, not the penniless governess whom he loved. It was all a mystery to him; but he could not ask calmly for an explanation. For a few moments pride and love fought for the mastery over him, and he stood perplexed, irresolute.

Leslie had no idea of the struggle that was raging in his heart. But it did not last long. If they had been standing in the public street, pride might have won the day; but the flowers, the dim lights, the distant music, and the solitude were all on love's side—and he yielded. Throwing aside all his doubts and crushing his pride, he took the girl he loved in his arms once more. This time however the love words he was longing to utter did not remain unspoken; and presently Leslie's arms stole around his neck, and he read his answer in her eyes. Then, with feelings that were too deep for words, he bent his head and kissed her lips reverently and tenderly.



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