

towards its entrance, my eyes seemed to play me some strange delusion, for they showed me Nelly talking earnestly to a tall gentleman wearing a Royal Arch apron, whose face was so bent as to avoid recognition, but whom I knew instantly for Lockyer.

It is not easy to work one's way very fast through a crowded ball-room, but it was done on that occasion, if ever. Fred was the first to notice me, and held out his hands with cordial words of greeting. The effrontery was altogether intolerable, and I am afraid there was a rough word or so, as I drew the lady haughtily away.

Fred looked at us both sadly and reproachfully, but spoke no word for a minute. "Some day or other you will be very sorry for all this, Harry," he at last said, slowly, and then we had separated in the throng, and he was no more seen that evening.

Nelly must have been ashamed of her momentary weakness, for she avoided voluntary reference to her conversation, and seemed almost reluctant to answer interrogation on its character. She was sorry for the poor fellow, that was all, and she couldn't help speaking kindly to him when she saw him. Of course she knew it was very wicked to take the money and all that, but we had got on very well without it, and why need we care now? And did I know Charley had returned all his letters a few weeks ago, and he was left quite without any friend now, and might she not find out where he was staying, and write to ask him to dinner! And as much more childish soft-heartedness of the sort as can readily be imagined.

For my part, the appearance of the man in Masonic garb, proclaiming openly his allegiance to the Order he had so far disgraced, hardened my heart to steel. A very little, and I had denounced him to every secretary in town. I am glad I didn't now, for what seemed but righteous indignation may have been, after all, personal vindictiveness. But there was a very speedy end to appeals in his favor, and whatever could be urged in exculpation must have been addressed to Miss Fenchurch, to whom regularly, for three months or so, quite an expensive mail-packet went home.

And yet his sad, sorrowful look wistfully appealed in many a recollection, and with execration for his abominable ingratitude there mingled irrepressibly a compassion that was half tender for the awful remorse by which it had been punished so terribly.

When we two should next stand face to face our positions were to be somewhat changed. But of the countless mirrors that flashed back the brilliancy of that last evening's assembled joyousness, there was not one with power of magic to reflect for us the prophetic shadow of the wild forest glade behind the mountain's barrier; of the danger, the struggle, the death, the despair, and the rescue, of the gallantry that was to work out redemption, and of the blind madness that was to avenge crime!