

enough for him when it came. Meanwhile, she would be happy. She could not fail to be so. She had got her handsome lover back again, sitting next to her at the table, and she need trouble her head about nothing further. The matter was off her hands. Had he not said he would settle it all for her? They were a merry party that evening, notwithstanding that Mr. Lyle felt himself lowered by sitting down to dinner with the overseer. Mr. Greville proved to be a most agreeable and talkative companion. Captain Philip was brimming over with happiness, Evelyn was softly and genuinely content, and poor little penitent Agnes, seeing her friend's evident pleasure, took heart of grace to believe herself forgiven, and looked pleased as well. They were dining in the same room in which Vernon and Captain Philip had once sat with Evelyn, and which held so many portraits of her dead Cousin Hugh. The little lawyer seemed very inquisitive upon the subject, and would have the history of each separate picture in turn.

"A fine, handsome boy, evidently," he observed; "what a pity he was lost—what an affliction for his parents, and yet, had he survived, you wouldn't be sitting at the head of the table at this moment, Miss Rayne, and dispensing your hospitalities in such a graceful manner. I wonder what you would say if the door were to open at this moment and Cousin Hugh walk in to claim his own?"

At this question Jasper Lyle smiled sarcastically, as much as to say, "Her fortitude may be put to a similar test before long;" and Captain Philip gazed eagerly in Evelyn's face, as though he would read there if she valued her property above himself.

"What should I say, Mr. Greville?" she answered smiling; "I should welcome him back with all the warmth of which I am capable, for the sake of his dear father, who was so good to me. I have often said (haven't I, Captain Philip?) that I should never be surprised to see Cousin Hugh turn up again."

"You have, indeed; and I have often replied that I couldn't imagine how a sensible woman could entertain such an absurd idea."

"But all your protestations have not knocked it out of my head," she answered merrily.

"Yet I'm afraid it would be the cause of serious annoyance to you, Miss Rayne, all the same," persisted Mr.