

THE PITFALL

He looked at her, and saw that she had suffered. A great compunction seized him. He took her hand and kissed it.

"You are the best woman in the world," he said. "Don't worry your kind heart about me. I'm not worth it." Then he moved restlessly away from her, and began turning over the knick-knacks on the silver table.

"Bethune has been tackled," he said suddenly. "The Duke of —— did it, and he has promised to marry her—if—if——"

"If what?"

"If his wife will divorce him. The Duke has got his promise in black and white."

"I don't think Lady Francis will divorce him."

"N-no. I've been with her to-day for an hour, but I couldn't move her. She doesn't seem to see that it's life or death for Elsa."

"You would not expect her, under the circumstances, to consider Elsa."

"Yes, I should," said the simpleton. "Why should not she help her? There are no children, and she does not care for Bethune. She never did. She ought to release him for the sake of—others."