

"sticks," but what her fate was, I know not. I never saw her again.

I don't think it took Dolly long to come to the decision required of her. No sooner had she gained her own little sanctum—a charming little room with a sooner had she gained her own little sanctum—a charming little room with a cheery fire burning in the grate—than she sank into a chair, and leaning her head on her hand, appeared buried in thought, though her reflections could not have been of a very perplexing or gloomy nature, judging from the happy light that shone in her eyes, and the tender smile that illuminated her features repeatedly. After a time, she bent her head to look at me.

"To think that he should really love me," she murmured; "he, so good, so clever, so true, to love me, poor little me, better than anyone else in the world. I'm afraid, even now, I cannot quite understand it. And yet, I—I—"

She stopped abruptly, and to my intense surprise, pressed her lips to one of my leaves; but she rose up directly after, as if ashamed of this exhibition of feeling, slipped me gently into a drawer, and left me in darkness and solitude.

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"I am going to wear this to-night, Mary. Just fix it into my hair please. I think I shall be quite ready then."

And Dolly took me from my hiding place into what seemed to me a perfect blaze of candle-light. Dolly, herself resplendent in some delicate pink material, sat demurely enough while the maid placed me among her tresses; but her cheeks were flushed with excitement, and there was a look of expectant happiness in her eyes. As for me, I fully felt my importance. I can tell you; for was not my lovely presence there to be the means of bringing the lovers together! Proudly I rested on that fair golden head as its owner ran lightly downstairs.

Ran? Ah! Why did she run? For, when we reached the hall, I felt my hold giving away—slowly, but surely, I was slipping from those tresses among which I so longed to remain. Meanwhile she lingered at the door of her room she had taken so much pains to decorate, as though half afraid to go further, and no sooner had she entered than I fell noiselessly to the ground, powerless in frame and crushed in spirit, but carrying with me one shining thread of silk from the wealth of hair I had left; and she, poor child, thought all the while I was nestling there giving a silent consent to her lover's suit.

A minute later a lady's dress swept me into a corner, and there I lay, blaming those clumsy fingers of the maid for not

fastening me in securely, and fretting at the sorrow and misunderstanding I was bringing upon the two lovers. Yet, what could I do? Nothing, absolutely nothing, but lie unobserved in my corner and wait.

In the midst of my vexation he came in and gave a quick, anxious glance around. Dolly, the object of his quest, was bending over the piano, at the far end of the room, speaking to an elderly lady seated at that instrument. Her back was turned towards him, so he read her answer in the shapely, unadorned head, and, turning ashy pale, he would have left the room unperceived had not a fussy old gentleman, who had the reputation of riding more than one hobby in his declining years, accosted him and began upon one of his pet subjects forthwith. Dolly, turning round, saw Mr. Westward thus engaged, and, doubtless, thought it was all right, and that he would come to her when the old gentleman had said his say; but the music set up, and dancing commenced—one hobby had been exhausted for the time being and another started—yet still he did not come.

Ah! Dolly, Dolly, you could not guess how a tiny sprig of holly in the corner was watching you, feeling for you, pitying you. However, you bore up bravely, joined in the whirling dance that made me giddy to look at, laughed gaily, talked gaily, and no one seemed to notice that your face was paler than usual, and that ever and anon your eyes turned wistfully to the two gentlemen near the door.

But when the evening drew towards a close, and dance after dance had passed, and still he came not to her, I think Dolly grew reckless and a little piqued at his neglect. Her furtive glances ceased, and she appeared wholly engrossed in her partners, especially in a tall dark-haired gentleman, very handsome and very graceful in the "whirligig," for I can call it nothing else. And Mr. Westward—I watched him at intervals, too. He scarcely spoke at all, but let his companion ride his hobby to his heart's content, while his eyes wandered restlessly round the room. It was evidently torture to him to remain there, and I wondered why he did so, especially when I marked the flush that rose to his brow if she passed him, as she did sometimes, while promenading with her partner, and her dress swept over his feet.

Things could not go on like this forever, and the crisis came at last.

Once more Dolly swept past him, still leaning on the arm of the tall gentleman; and this time some of their conversation attracted Mr. Westward's attention.

"Then you are really going away to-morrow," she was saying. "I am sorry. There will be nobody worth speaking to