

of all she spoke to Doctor Dunsyre. Knowing he was expected one evening at Meadowflats, she walked to the end of the avenue to meet him. He was on foot also, and when they met she turned down a little path which led by a roundabout way to the house.

'I came out on purpose to meet you, David, because I want to speak to you,' she said, with a smile. 'Will you let me appropriate ten minutes of your valuable time?'

'Surely,' said the Doctor readily, and looked with undisguised admiration at the bright, happy face, to which all the bloom and girliness of yore had returned.

'It is about your marriage I want to speak. How long are you going to wait? Are you not of age yet?'

'Rather; but what can I say to convince Caroline that my patience has a limit?' he asked good-humouredly.

'Well, David, I have quite decided that mamma and I are to winter abroad, probably at Nice or Mentone, and we want all the bustle of the marriage over first. Why should it not take place in September?'

'If I can convince Caroline of the expediency of the step, it shall take place then, Gertrude,' he answered promptly.

'Surely our combined efforts will win the day,' said Lady Lundie, with a sunny smile. 'And Margaret will help us. She is on our side, I know.'

'You are a very good friend to me, Lady Lundie,' said David, with a comical smile.

'Very. Not altogether disinterested, I fear. I think Caroline is waiting on my account. Of course we must miss her; but though she is your wife she will not be lost to us, David,' answered Lady Lundie, with full eyes.

'Surely not. I hope that, instead of thinking you have lost a sister, you will prove you have only gained a brother, Gertrude,' said the Doctor warmly.

'You have long been a brother to me, David,' said Lady Lundie frankly and truly. 'Well, here we are. Don't tell Caroline I spoke, mind, or she will take me to task.'

'Not a word,' laughed the Doctor.

Then Gertrude, leaving him to enter the house, continued her walk round to the stables, called Lion, and took him down for a dip in the burn.