

"Why, it is a deed of gift!" he exclaimed. "The château—no, Miss Beverly, you are more than generous, but this cannot be. The château is yours—I would rather it belonged to you than to anyone on earth, even myself—and yours it must remain."

"I bought it for you. It will break my heart if you refuse," said Virginia, with tears in her voice.

The sound of her pain smote him with anguish. He lost his head and forgot the barrier between them—that he was poor, with a dark past and an uncertain future, that she was a great heiress.

"Break your heart!" he repeated. "My darling, my angel, I would give all the blood in mine for one smile from you. I never meant to say this. I oughtn't to say it now, but—it said itself. You must have known before. You are the very soul of me, though I'm not worthy to touch your dear hand. I couldn't take the old home from you—don't you understand? I couldn't live there again with this love of you in my heart, for it would make it so much the harder. I can't forget you; I would rather die than forget you. This love is too sweet to live without, but I know