

KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS

J. HARRISON

Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

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CHAPTER XV.—Continued.

"Are you there, Mildred?" called Aunt Estelle from the doorway. "You can come back to Leigh immediately. Julie has just finished my new lace fichu, and I don't like it at all. Come, and show her how to arrange it properly."

Mr. Eric the old man ain't dead yet—ain't dead yet, by no means." His tone was so strange that again Hugh wondered. In the hall he met Elizabeth, who had just carried a tray into the dining-room. Hugh caught sight of a grey-haired man seated at the table. He had laid his book aside to turn to the tray of food. Elizabeth went to the hall door, opened it, and followed the young man out on the porch.

"Do you think Uncle Matthew very ill?" she asked, with real solicitude in her tones. "Feverish, perhaps," said Hugh, kindly. "He is too old now to neglect himself. If he is not better to-morrow, send someone up to the manor."

The old man did not take the usual papers from his desk this morning as his young amanuensis seated herself beside him. Instead he leaned back in the revolving chair, swung round it, and sat in silence looking at her. "Come nearer," he said, "to me, child," he said. "Come where I can see your face. The old fellow is not so keen-eyed as once he was. And I have a question to ask which those features of yours will answer, if your lips refuse to. Come here to me."

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