

One Night's Mystery.

By May Agnes Fleming.

CHAPTER V.

'PART NOW, PART WELL, PART WISE APART.' Mrs. Colonel Delamere, a fat, fair, and forty matron with the usual comfortable, placid, stall-fed look, came forward in pearl-grey silk to receive her youthful guests. Miss Sydney Owenson, her especial pet, she kissed in effusion.

'You darling child! how good you do to come so early!' she whispered. 'And so we are really going to lose you for good!' 'Who told you?' Sydney demanded, opening wide her grey eyes.

'Mademoiselle Chateauroux—I called yesterday. Told me you were to be married—a little girl of seventeen. My pet, it's a shame.'

'Is it?' laughed Sydney; 'but a little bird has whispered through the town that Mrs. Colonel Delamere ran away and was married at sixteen.'

'So she did, my dear, and a simpton she was for her pains,' Mrs. Delamere answered, shrugging her ample shoulders. 'Sydney, why did you fetch that shrewd Miss Jones? I have a treat in store for you, girls, but it's against orders—three con- traband admirers who are dying to meet my pretty pensionnaires. Miss Jones will be sure to spoil all.'

'Poor Miss Jones! she seems to make enemies on every hand. It is war to the knife between her and Cyrella. Are you really going to introduce the new arrivals? I heard the regiment had come. How nice of you!'

'They will drop in after dinner—the colonel dines with them at the mess, and will bring them over afterwards. You are to have par- vor croquet, and a carpet dance, and go home by moonlight. If only that Miss Jones would not tell!'

'How plaintively you speak of that Miss Jones,' Sydney laughed. 'Let the most fasci- nating of your military heroes make love to her, Mrs. Delamere, give her his arm home, and so seal the dragon's mouth.'

'Madame looked doubtfully across at Miss Jones. Do you think so, pet? But then she is so plain, poor thing, and not so young as she was ten years ago, and though they're all plucky fellows enough, yet I'm afraid they're not equal to it. However, we will eat, drink, and be merry to-night, if we are to die for it to-morrow.'

'All things went on in a most exemplary way for the next two hours, until the six o'clock dinner ended. Not a red coat, nor even a black coat, made its appearance. Games of all kinds, books of all sorts, had been pro- vided by Mrs. Delamere, the jolliest of hostesses, for her young friends. They dined to- gether waited upon by a solemn, elderly but- ler, and even Miss Jones was amused and pro- pitiated by Mrs. Delamere's condescending kindness.'

'I really want the poor things to enjoy themselves this evening, Miss Jones,' she said con- fidently. 'You must permit them a little extra liberty, and at least one hour more than usual.'

'Miss Jones fixed her dull, glimmering eyes upon the colonel's lady, scenting danger afar off. My orders are not to allow my pupils out of my sight, madame,' she answered, stiffly; 'and to bring them home positively at nine. It is as much as my position is worth to dis- obey.'

'Oh, nonsense! my dear Miss Jones. I will make it all right with Mademoiselle Chateau- roux. Do recollect how little amusement the poor things have, and remember we were once young ourselves.'

'It was the most unfortunate appeal the good lady could have made. Miss Jones was verging upon the thirties, a period when any unmarried lady may be pardoned for becom- ing sensitive. Her leaden eyes absolutely flashed.

'Mrs. Delamere is very kind, but my orders were positive, and it is my duty to obey.'

'She set her thin lips, and looked across at Cyrella Hendrick. The military are coming, and I shall spoil your sport, my lady, if I can,' she thought vindictively.

'Miss Hendrick at the moment was the centre of a circle of laughing, eager faces. They had adjourned to the ample grounds in front of the house, and seated under a great scarlet maple, armed with a pack of cards, Cyrella was gravely lifting the mystic veil of futurity.

'I see here, my pretty lady,' she was draw- ing in true gypsy tone to Miss Owenson, 'a sudden journey and a change in your whole life. Here is a fair man who is destined to cause you a great deal of trouble. Here are tears, a disappointment, a sick-bed, and—yes—a death.'

'Cyrella! Sydney cried, her gray eyes flashing indignantly. 'It is on the cards—look for yourself, and very near, too. Here is a dark man, this king of spades, who follows you everywhere, and a dark woman, who is your enemy, and comes between you and the fair man, and—'

'She stopped suddenly, as suddenly as if she had been shot. For a voice broke upon them as she uttered the words. 'I never go in for high stakes myself,' said the pleasant, lazy voice; 'say ponies, or monkeys. My exchequer never stands anything higher. My dear colonel, what a charming scene! a veritable group from Wat- teau, and sitting on straw, like Marjory Daw! These are the young ladies Mrs. Delamere spoke of no doubt.'

'The speaker raised his eye-glass complacently, and stood surveying the group from Watteau, as though it had been got up for his special delectation. He had spoken in an undertone, but in the clear, crisp, still air, every word had reached the ears of the fortune-teller. She did not start, she did not look up, a sudden stillness came over her from head to foot. Then she lifted her hand- some, high-bred face, and went coolly on. 'The dark lady is in love with the fair gentleman, and will do her best to part him from you. Whether she succeeds or not is not on the cards, but I see here no end of trouble, disappointment, sickness, and tears.'

'A very dreary prediction for lips so gentle to pronounce. Fairest fortune-teller, will you not spare my future as well? 'The gentleman whose betwixt never excelsed ponies or monkeys had advanced, bowing gracefully, smiling sweetly upon the flutter- ing group. The seers lifted her eyes from the pack, and glanced up at him with the careless indifference of a practised coquette. But Sydney Owenson saw, and Miss Jones saw, that the faint r carnation her olive cheeks ever wore had deepened to vivid crim- son.'

'Certainly,' she answered with perfect sang froid; 'cross the sly's palm with silver, my pretty gentleman, and tell me which shall it be—past, present or future? 'She held out her hand, all present looking

on in a flutter of expectation, a startled ex- pression upon Miss Jones' vinegar visage, a bland smile upon Colonel Delamere's.

'The future, by all means,' the gentleman answered, making search gravely for the coin. He found a sixpence, and dropped it with a second Chesterfieldian bow into the ex- tended palm. She shuffled the cards. Ouk, she said authoritatively.

'The stranger obeyed, a military stranger all saw, though in mirth. Miss Hendrick took up the first 'cut,' and began to read. 'This is the knave of hearts—you are the knave, monsieur! This means water—you have recently made a long voyage. There is the queen of spades—a dark lady whom you are to meet soon, very soon. Let me warn monsieur against this young dark lady; she will cause him endless trouble and mischief if he does not cut her acquaintance at once. Here is a blonde lady, the queen of diamonds, immensely wealthy. Look at all these cards that follow her. She will fall in love with the knave if he sets about it properly. She will may even ultimately marry him. She will not be young and certainly not pretty, but as you see, she has a fortune that is im- mense, and that is much better for the knave of hearts, and much more to his taste than youth or pretty looks. The dark lady is poor, and really will make monsieur no end of worry whenever she appears. This card certainly means a wedding. Here it all is—monsieur turns his back upon the evil-minded dark lady—marries the queen of diamonds and her money bags, and lives happy ever after.'

'She sprang to her feet, bowed low to the gentlemen, and turned as if to depart. 'Ha ha, ha!' boomed out the big bass laugh of the colonel. 'By Jupiter, that's good—oh, Carew? If she had known you all your life, by Jove, she couldn't have hit home better—hey, my boy? Let me intro- duce you—Miss Cyrella Hendrick. Mr. Carew of the—th Fusiliers.'

'Carew!' The grey eyes of Sydney Owenson opened in swift, sudden surprise. She glanced at Cyrella, strangely startled, but that young lady was bowing as to one she had never seen before—the gentleman with equal gravity.

'Sydney drew a long breath. After all Carew was not such a very uncommon name. There might certainly be two men in the world who bore it. If she could only hear his other name—'

'Freddy, my boy,' cried the colonel's cheer- ful stentor tones, 'here is another. Miss Owenson, Lieutenant Carew.'

'Freddy? She flashed a glance of amaze and delight across at her friend, but the face of Cyrella Hendrick was beyond her reading. She had turned partly away, with only half- indignant, half-disdainful expression on the handsome buxette face.

'Mr. Carew, Miss Jones,' says genial Colonel Delamere, and Miss Jones makes a prim, stiffish, little bow. 'Mademoiselle Marie Antoinette Desereux, Mademoiselle Angèle Garnet.'

'Twice more does Mr. Carew bestow his graceful court chamberlain bow and smile on the bread-and-butter school girls, and then he is free.

'Two more coming, Roebuck, whispers the elderly colonel to Sydney; 'two more—good men and true. Fred Carew and I toddled on ahead. How does Carew compare with le beau Bertie—eh, little pearl?'

'Mr. Carew is very good-looking indeed, sir; not very tall, but that's a matter of taste,' answers, demurely, Miss Owenson.

'Not a bit of a dandy—eh, my dear? Re- gards you, as they say here, the lavender kids, the shiny boots, the swell hat, the moss-rose in the button hole. The coat is one of Poole's masterpieces; but I suppose you are not cap- able of appreciating Poole's chef-d'œuvres. But, with all his Dundrearyism, he's one of the best and most honorable little fellows that ever breathed, is my young friend, Fred Carew.'

'Indeed, sir? 'Yes, that he is. I've known him since he was the size of this cigar. May I light it? Thank you, my dear. Miss Hendrick hit him off to the life—ha! ha! 'Rich wife—not pretty—not young—lots of money—ha! ha! ha! Clever girl, very, that handsome, black- eyed Miss Hendrick. Couldn't have struck home more neatly if she had been his mother. Hasn't a stiver but his pay—Carew hasn't—best connections going, but no expectations. Terrible flirt, but no marrying man. How- ever that's nothing to you, my dear. You're booked. Lucky fellow, that young Vaughan. I've heard of him. Ah! you needn't blush— if I were only twenty years younger and a single man. Well, you may laugh if you like, —but Vaughan wouldn't have it all his own way. Yes, as I say—as Miss Hendrick said rather—a wife with fifty thousand down is about Freddy's figure. The widow, or the orphan, my dear, it doesn't matter which, and the money not selfishly tied on herself either.'

'Thus guilelessly prattled on the colonel, while Sydney laughed and watched her friend with intense curiosity. At least Colonel Delamere did not dream that Mr. Carew and Miss Hendrick had ever met before—no one did except herself. Yes—one other Miss Jones' leaden eyes might be dull, but they were sharp, and where Cyrella Hendrick was concerned hatred had sharpened them to needle-points. She had noticed the first start, the first flush, tall-tale color; she had seen for one moment an expression on her face she had never seen there before. The fortune-telling too, had been peculiar. Did she mean herself by the 'dark lady,' Miss Jones wondered? Had they ever met before? Had they met before—in England, for example—and was there some reason for keep- ing that meeting secret? She would watch, and wait, and see.

'Mr. Carew had joined Miss Hendrick, and walked away by her side. For a moment neither spoke—the young lady looking serenely before her straight into space, the young gentleman watching her with a curious smile. He was the first to speak. 'Well, Beauty? 'Well, Freddy?' Cyrella Hendrick's black eyes turned from the horizon to his face at last. 'It is of you, Fred Carew, after all. How in the name of all that is astonishing do you come to be here?'

'What! Mr. Carew said, lifting his blonde eyebrows, 'do you mean to tell me, Beauty, you did not know I was here? 'Know you were, here! Good Heaven! Fred, what a preposterous question. Freddy Carew away from Regent Street and Rotten Row! Fred Carew out of sight of White's Club House and a Bond Street tailor! No—the human mind refuses to take in such an antithesis! I would as soon expect to meet the Czar of Russia in the wilds of Canada as you, Mr. Carew.'

'Ah! Freddy sighs, plaintively. 'You can't feel sorrier for me, Beauty, than I feel for myself. But the fortune of war, my dear child, however cruel, must be accepted by a soldier. Still, since it has brought me to you, I can't say I regret it.'

'You knew I was here?—from papa, I sup- pose. 'Your papa is improving the shining hours in Boulogne, my dear Cyrella, and has been for the past year. No; I knew you were in Canada somewhere, and that knowledge alone

made the thought of my exile endurable. I had no idea we were to meet, until this very day, at mess.'

'And then—' 'And then our garrulous friend, the colonel—our old lady, the fellows call him—let out the blindest secret. Capital place, Felt St. Jacques' Freddy, my boy,' says Delamere to me. 'Yes, mon colonel,' I answer. 'Cap- ital place for a man to go melancholy mad and eat his throat, I should say.' 'Not at all,' retorts my superior officer; 'lots of fun- famous for maple sugar and pretty girls. There's a whole seraglio of beauties down there in the Rue St. Dominique, and you're to meet two of the prettiest at my house this evening—smeared-eyed, golden-haired Syd- ney; black-eyed, raven-tressed Cyrella. Take either, my boy, with my blessing—you pay your money, and you take your choice. Need I tell you, Beauty, I woke up at that— at the sound of your name? 'Both Beauties, both hereless, my boy,' pursued the dodd- ering old colonel; 'and an hrefess is just about what you want most, I should say, Freddy.' 'Precisely, sir,' answered; 'to which do you advise me to lay siege—belle, blonde or brun- nette? 'Well, my little Sydney, Miss Owenson is bespoken, I'm sorry to say,' Delamere answers, 'so it must be Miss Hendrick. Eyes like sloes, lips like cherries, cheeks like roses, and the air of a duchess. 'Yes, by Jove!' cries the vagabond old colonel, smacking his lips, 'the air of an empress. Benedictine, my son, and go in and win. So I came, Beauty—I needn't tell you how I felt, and you met me as though you never seen me before. I made sure you knew all about my being here, and were on guard.'

'Not I,' Cyrella answered when your voice reached me, as I sat there telling for- tunes, I was struck dumb. But oh, dear old fellow! how glad I am to see you—how good it seems to meet a familiar face in this de- sert of Canada.'

'Miss Hendrick' peals forth a sharp ac- cented voice; and Miss Hendrick wakes up almost as from a dream at the too familiar sound. 'Miss Hendrick, you are wanted in the drawing-room to sing.'

'Mr. Carew's glass goes to his eye; Miss Hendrick turns half round upon her foe, with her usual air of serene impertinence.

'Couldn't you take my place this once, my dear Miss Jones? (Miss Jones has about as much voice as a consumptive raven.) 'You see I am well amused as it is.'

'I must insist upon your returning to the house, instantly,' cries Miss Jones, in a rising key. 'My orders are, as you know, not to let you out of my sight.'

'She advances upon them. Mr. Carew, his glass still in his eye, regards her as he might some newly-discovered and wonderful spec- imen of the British megatherium.

'But, my dear Miss Jones,' he begins, in most persuasive accents, with his most win- ning smile, 'there is really no need of all this trouble. Your natural and affectionate anxiety about Miss Hendrick does equal honor to you head and heart, but I assure you, no harm shall come to her while she is in my care. I am ready to shield her, if ne- cessary with my life.'

'Mademoiselle Chateauroux's orders were not to let any of my pupils out of my sight; more particularly Miss Cyrella Hendrick— more particularly with gentlemen. I shall obey Mademoiselle's orders,' is Miss Jones's grim and crushing reply.

'It's of no use, Freddy,' Cyrella says, in an undertone; 'we must go back and part. I don't care for her, not for Mademoiselle Chateauroux either; but I do care for Aunt Phil. To offend her means ruin to me; and the deadliest offence I can give her is to have anything to say to you. Let us go back, and for pity's sake don't speak to me again until you say good-night.'

'But, Beauty, this is absurd,' says Fred, as they turn to retrace their steps; 'don't speak to you again until I say good-night! What ridiculous nonsense! I have ten thousand things to say to you, and I mean to say them in spite of all the Gorgon aunts and grim duennas on earth. When and where will you meet me?'

'I will not meet you at all, Freddy. I tell you it is impossible. I am watched more closely than any other girl in the school, and all are watched closely enough, goodness knows. Miss Jones's basilisk eyes are upon me this moment, and Miss Jones will faith- fully report every word and look to the powers that be the moment she returns to the pensionnaire.'

'Hang Miss Jones! 'With all my heart,' says Cyrella, laughing; 'nothing would give me greater pleasure. At the same time I can't afford to have my mis- deeds reported to Aunt Phil; and so, sir, let us shake hands and part.'

'Never, Cyrella, you must meet me, and at once. Appoint some time and place, here in the town, and I will be there, whether it be midnight or midday.'

'Impossible. I am never permitted to stir outside of the gates alone.'

'Then, by Jove! we shall meet inside the gates. I will scale the wall this very night, and you shall stand and meet me in the grounds. Cyrella, for Heaven's sake don't say no, as I see you are going to! It is three years since we met. Have you forgotten all that—'

'I have forgotten nothing, Fred—nothing; the girl answers almost with emotion; better for me perhaps if I had. Yes, I will meet you—at least I will try. I risk more than you dream of, but I will risk it. If you can get over the wall of the pensionnaire to-night, I will try to meet you in the grounds.'

'My darling!—under Miss Jones's argus eyes, Mr. Carew takes and squeezes Miss Hen- drick's hand—are your windows high? Do you run any risk in coming down?'

'I run risk enough, as I told you, but not of that kind. My room is on the second floor, and there is a tree close to the window, from whose branches I have often swung myself into the playground. Get over the wall about eleven to-night, and if it be possible at all, I will meet you. But mind—only this once, Freddy; not even you will tempt me to do it again.'

'You will write to me, Beauty, and allow me to—' 'No letter comes in or goes out of the pen- sionnaire that does not pass under Mademoiselle Chateauroux's scrutiny. No, Fred; there can be no writing and no meeting except this one. Fate is against us, as it has been from the first. We were not one iota further apart when the Atlantic rolled between us than we will be here together in Canada.'

'That remains to be seen,' Fred Carew an- swered. 'My own opinion is that fate has not brought us face to face in this queer old world forgotten town for nothing. We shall meet—you and me, 'Rilla, love—and go on meeting, please Heaven, to the end of the chapter.'

'They had reached the house. Cyrella went in at once, while Mr. Carew lingered and al- lowed Miss Jones to join him. The yellow half-moon was lifting her face over the tre- tops, the air was spicy with aromatic odors from the pine woods. Through the open windows came the gay strains of 'La Claire Fontaine,' the national air of Lower Canada, played by Miss Sydney Owenson.

'Why should we go in just yet, Miss Jones? says Mr. Carew, in his slow, sleepy voice, with his little old hat, but I perceive you have a shawl across your arm; allow me to put it on—you may take cold—and permit me to offer you my arm for a walk.'

'He removes the shawl as he speaks, and adjusts it as tenderly and solicitously about Miss Jones's angular shoulders as though it had been Miss Hendrick herself; then, still smiling, he offers her his arm.

'The sympathy is great. Miss Jones is nine- and-twenty, and not even at nineteen was her head ever turned by the flattering attentions of fickle man; and Miss Jones abetted the milk of human kindness has been somewhat curdled in her vestal breast by a long course of refractory pupils, is human, very human.

'Do come!' says Mr. Carew, sweetly. 'It is really a sin to spend such a night in-doors, the young ladies? Oh, the young ladies are perfectly safe. There is no one there but the colonel and Mrs. Delamere. The other fel- lows said they would come, but they haven't as you may perceive. All the better for me, Miss Jones,' smiles Mr. Carew, drawing her hand within his arm, 'since it allows me the pleasure of a *l'été-à-été* stroll with you.'

'A flush, an absolute flush, rises to Miss Jones's sallow cheeks. Yet, since none of those military men had come, there could surely be no harm in a little walk with Mr. Carew. She coughed a little cough of assent, and meandered away with her subtle tempter.

'Oh, Cy, look! do look!' cries Sydney Owenson, springing from the piano. 'Here's rich- ness! Miss Jones and Mr. Carew getting up a flirtation in the moonlight! She snipped upon in the mood, and now she leads him off captive herself!'

'Haw! haw! haw! Yes, by Jove!' booms the colonel; 'Carew has trotted off Miss Jones! The wolf spares the lambs, and makes off from four of the prettiest girls in Canada, and be- gins spooning with the old maid! What a capital joke for the mess table to-morrow!'

'A most capital joke,' says Cyrella Hen- drick; but her black eyes flash as they follow the two retreating figures. She knows as well as that she stands there that he is doing it for her sake, martyrizing himself to propitiate the dragon, but in her heart she loves this elegant, soft-spoken daddy so passionately well, that the bare sight of him flirting with even poor, plain Miss Jones is hateful to her.

'The lamps are lit in the drawing-room; song and music, and games of all kinds go on. An hour passes, and the trunks have not returned.

'You don't suppose Carew can have eaten her, Dorothy, my love?' says the old colonel, with a diabolical grin to his wife. 'Begad! if they're not here in ten minutes, I shall con- sider it my duty to go in search of them.'

'They enter as he speaks—Mr. Carew calm, complacent, listless, but not looking more bored than customary—Miss Jones with a flush, glowing from either pippin cheek.

'Mr. Carew asks me to explain the process of converting apple sap into maple sugar,' she explains elaborately, to Mr. Delamere; 'so we wandered down to the grove of maples, and really had no idea an hour had passed.'

'Pray don't apologize, my dear Miss,' an- swered Mrs. Delamere, demurely. 'I am only too grateful to Mr. Carew if he has helped to make your visit agreeable. What! going so soon? Oh, surely not, Miss Jones.'

'But it was past nine, and Miss Jones, con- scious of having swerved from the stern path of rectitude, is resolute. So the girls flutter up- stairs after wraps, still giggling in chorus over Miss Jones's unexpected flirtation. Miss Hen- drick does not giggle, she smiles scornfully, and transfers her teacher with her derisive black eyes—a glance Miss Jones for once did not care to meet.

'Begad, Freddy,' says the colonel when the ladies had left the room, 'I expected it would have been a case of love at first sight with you this evening, but I didn't—no, by Jove, I didn't think it would have been with the old maid.'

'Miss Jones is a most intelligent and well- informed young lady,' answers Mr. Carew, imperturbably, and with half-closed eyes. 'I am going to see her home.'

'They flutter back as he says it, and he and the colonel rise. Good nights are spoken while Mr. Carew draws on his overcoat and gloves, looking very elegant and amiable, and a little vibrating thrill of expectation goes through the group of girls. To whom will he offer his arm? He walks up to Miss Jones as they think it, with the air of its being an un- derstood thing, and once again draws her hand within his coat sleeve.

'En avant, mon colonel,' he says; 'we will follow.'

'The colonel gives his arm to his favorite, Sydney, the other to Cyrella, and leads the way. The two French girls come after. Mr. Carew and Miss Jones bring up the rear, sauntering slowly in the piercing white moon- light. All the way, along the deathly silent streets, the colonel cracks his ponderous and rather stupid jokes. Sydney laughs good- naturedly, but Cyrella Hendrick's darkly handsome face looks sombre and silent. They reach the gates—Babette, the portress, is there awaiting them. Universal hand shaking and adieu follow. For one second Cyrella's cold fingers lie in Fred Carew's close clasp, for one second the blue eyes meet the black ones meaningly.

'At eleven,' he whispers; 'don't fail.' Then the great gates clang upon them, and Babette, yawning loudly, goes in before into the gray, gloomy pensionnaire.

CHAPTER VI.

WHY MISS DORNER HATED FRED CAREW.

ALL is still when they enter; the pension- naires are safely in their rooms, and in bed. Mademoiselle Stephanie, looking like a snuff- colored specter, in a loose, white wrap, awaits them. A few questions, a recognized formula, are asked and answered, then they are dismissed with 'bon nuit, mes chères,' and bed-room lamps.

'In twenty minutes, young ladies I will come for the lights,' is Miss Jones's valedic- tory, as she mounts up to her own room.

'Good night, Cy,' Sydney Owenson, cries, gaily; 'don't dream of that pretty little Mr. Carew if you can help. His mad passion for Miss Jones is patent to the dullest observer.' 'Bonne nuit et bonne réves, ma belle,' Cyrella answers, with rather a forced smile; 'we would all be happier if we never dreamed of Mr. Carew or any other of his kind.'

'To-night, goes virtuously and sleepily to bed at once, gazing audibly. Miss Hendrick, throws off her hat and jacket, draws a volume of Dante, in the original, toward her, with a book of Italian exercises, and sets to work translating. So, the twenty minutes up, Miss Jones finds her.

'Industrious, upon my word!' sneers Miss Jones. She is generally worsted in the fray, but she can never by any chance let her enemy pass without a cut-and-thrust.

'Yes, Miss Jones, Cyrella replies, 'and if I continue to be industrious until I am—well, nine-and-twenty say—I may hope to attain the elevated position of fourth-rate teacher in a second-rate Canadian school. I may even aspire to entertain military men, six or seven years my junior, by an hour's dissertation on the art of traking maple sugar.'

She rises with a short, contemptuous laugh, and begins to unlace her boots. Another in- stant and the door closes behind Miss Jones, and she is alone.

'It is a vividly, brilliantly, bright night. The yellow moonshine floods the room as Cy- rilla raises the window, wraps a shawl around her, and sits down. 'To-night's watch lying on the dressing-table, points to ten. Another hour and she and Fred Carew will be together once more. Her pulses thrill at the thought. She loves this man; she has loved him since she was ten years old—of all the bliss that life holds it holds none greater than his presence for her. The mystery and danger of the adventure, too, have their charm. Life has gone on, for the past three years, so fat, stale, and unprofitable that to-night's excite- ment and wrong-doing, if you will, possess an irresistible fascination. If it is ever dis- covered, if it ever reaches Miss Dorner's ears, all is up with her forever—her last hope of Miss Dorner's fortune is gone. And she longs for and covets Miss Dorner's fortune, this school-girl of nineteen, as the blind de- sire sight. Miss Dorner hates Fred Carew, and all of his name, with a hatred as intense as—even Cyrella must own—in a retributive light is just. The story is this—told with passionate intensity and vivid fierceness by Miss Dorner herself, the girl remembers well.

'Forty years before, the father of Phillip Dorner had died, leaving a fortune, a widow, and a daughter of eight. Two years passed, and the widow was a widow no longer—she had taken for her second husband good-look- ing, good for nothing Tom Hendrick. Of that marriage came Jack, the father of Cy- rilla. It Mr. Tom Hendrick had expected to possess the late Mr. Dorner's fortune, as well as his widow, he was doomed to be dis- appointed—the sixty thousand pounds were tightly tied up on Phillis. Aunt Phillis, even as a child, was not easily to be wroned.

'She endured the reckless, riotous life of her step-father's house, the daily insolence of her bold, handsome, half-brother Jack, for a dozen years or more; then her mother died, and Miss Phillis Dorner separated herself en- tirely from her disreputable relations, and en- gaging a *dame de compagnie*, set up for herself as an heiress. The wife of the member for her native county brought her out, one or two fine ladies took her up, she was presented at court, ran the round of the season, and finished by finding herself engaged to Frederic Dunraith, nephew of the Earl of Dunraith.

'She was three and twenty years old, slightly lame and pathetically ugly. Fred Carew of the Blues was handsome of face, graceful of figure, elegant of dress and man- ner, all that his son was to-day, and more. He was poor—a beggar absolutely, over head and ears in debt—a rich wife his one earthly hope of salvation from Queen's Bench for life. The ugly, the rich Miss Dorner fell in love with him. Mr. Carew was told so, pulled his long blonde whiskers perplexedly, thought the matter over, 'more in sorrow than in anger,' faced the worst like a man, and went and proposed to Miss Dorner.

'She was intensely, infatuatedly, insanely almost in love with him. Like many very plain people, she had a morbid adoration of beauty in others. Mr. Carew had fascinated her at sight—she continued so to fascinate her to the end. If anything could have made plain Phillis Dorner lovely it would surely have been the perfect, the intense joy, that filled her heart when Frederic Carew asked her to be his wife. Here was the perfect love that casteth out fear. She accepted him, she trusted him—his one word, she bowed down and idolized him.

'The noble relatives of Mr. Carew were de- lighted, and made most friendly advances toward the bride-elect at once. It is true the sixty thousand pounds had been made in coal, but the coal did not dim their golden glitter in the least. There had been talk of some penniless girl down in Berks- hire with two blue eyes and a pink-and- pearl face alone to recommend her; but that was all at an end, no doubt. Fred had come to his senses, and realized that love is all very well in theory—a pretty girl is well enough to waltz with, but when a wife is in the question the thing to be looked at is her bank account. Frederic had done his duty; his noble relatives were quite prepared to do theirs, and accept the coal merchant's heiress as one of the family. The season ended, they invited her down to their country place in Sussex, the accepted suitor dutifully play- ing *cavalier servante* to a by no means exact- ing mistress.

'She gave so much and was satisfied to re- ceive so little, that it was really pathetic to watch them. Frederic was perpetually run- ning up to town, and staying away days at a time, even when the wedding was not two weeks off. But Miss Dorner asked no ques- tions, gave him wistful glances and smiles at parting, joyful glances and smiles at coming—come when and how he might. In secret she had made over her whole fortune to be his indisputably in the hour that made him her husband. A fool you think her, perhaps. Well, very likely, but a folly none need quar- rel with, since it is very far from common.

'Three days before the wedding-day there was a dinner party, given by the Earl and Countess of Dunraith, in honor of the approach- ing nuptials. Mr. Carew had run up to town as usual, two days before, but had promised to be in time for the dinner. He failed, how- ever, and to the chagrin and annoyance of host and hostess did not put in an appearance at all. The bride-elect bore it bravely—some- thing had detained Fred; she missed him sorely, but in all things his lordly will was her law. 'The king could do no wrong.'

'One hour after dinner, as she sat in the draw- ing room, listening to the song Lady Dun- rath was singing, looking out at the tremu- lous beauty of the summer twilight, gemmed with golden stars, and wondering wistfully whereabouts her darling might be, a note was presented to her by a servant. It was from him—her heart gave a glad bound. This was to explain satisfactorily his absence, no doubt. With a smile she opened the note; from that until the hour she died no smile like that ever softened the hard face of Phillis Dorner.

'Dover, September 18th—' 'My DEAR MISS DORNER:—While waiting for the Calais boat I drop you a line. I am awfully sorry to disappoint you; but really when it came to the point, I was not equal to it. I mean my marriage with you. Besides I was engaged to another young lady before I ever knew you, and my honor was seriously compromised. She is poor, but we must make up our minds to that, I suppose, somehow. 'Better is a dinner of herbs where love abideth than a stalled ox and contention.' I was married this morning, and we are now on our way to Paris to spend the honeymoon. Regretting once more any little disappoint- ment I may have caused you, I remain, dear Miss Dorner, very truly yours,

'FREDERICK DUNRAITH CAREW.'

'Love not! love not! Oh, warning vainly said,' sang Lady Dunraith at the piano. Phl- lis Dorner crushed the note in her hand, and listened to the song. To the last day of her life the words, the air, the look of the violet- twilight landscape would remain photographed on her brain and heart. 'She had loved him, words are weak and poor to tell how greatly,

She had trusted him with her whole soul. From that hour she loved no one, she trusted no one, to the end of her life.

'Her song ended, the countess came over to her, as she stood in the bay looking fixedly out at the rising harvest moon. 'Was that note from Fred, tiresome boy? 'Why was he not here? 'It was from Fred,' Miss Dorner answered. 'He could not come.'

'Lady Dunraith looked at her curiously. What a livid color her face was! what a black, dilated look there was in her eyes! 'Fred is well!' she anxiously asked.

'He is quite well, I think, Lady Dunraith. Her ladyship moved away, too well bred to ask further questions. An hour later—with- out one farewell, without taking a single one of her trunks or boxes—Phillis Dorner vanished from Dunraith Park forever.