

companion,—a friend—even more, the darling of his affections,—one who had been raised from infancy with him—one who had been a companion to him in all his childish sports and rambles. And now that they had attained maturer years, they were forming plans so that they might enter the great drama of life united by a stronger tie than friendship.

There were some peculiar points of resemblance between them. He was an only son, she an only daughter. He was noble in appearance, she was lovely. His father was a bankrupt merchant, hers likewise. The one difference between them was—he was of Spanish descent; Arabella Melodine, for such was her name, was of French. But this was never thought of, and why should it be? Both claimed the same country now; if it was not the land of their birth, it was the land of their adoption. From mere infants they had never known any other; their parents, friends and home were in it. Their affections and future prospects were centred in it. In fact all the ties that bound them to earth and to each other were in it, and what more could they desire?

Don Zeres Seville was a man of sound judgment—rather reserved in manners. His dark eyebrows, heavy moustache and beard gave him a commanding expression. Friends he had many, enemies none, confidentials few. There was but one, apart from his own household, in whom he confided, and to him were entrusted all private transactions, business or otherwise. His name, Baldwin Baesil—his occupation, lawyer in the neighboring town of S—.

In Don Seville's employ were two servants, Everard Lynn and Sophie Bright.

Everard's father had been at one time a banker in Bristol, England. His mother died at an early age, and he was left to the sole care of his father, who lavished upon him all the affection of his nature. To the furtherance of his education his father paid particular attention. So that when he had attained his eighteenth year he was the possessor of a first class education. About this period his father was falsely accused of forgery, and thrown into prison. Being a man of high standing and possessed of a very sensitive nature, he could not withstand so gross an insult, and took it so much to heart that he died in prison just three days after having been placed therein. This was a severe blow to

young Everard. His grief was almost intolerable and the more so on account of his father's death occurring before the falsity of his accusation had been proven. What to do he knew not. Stay in England longer he would not. Alone in the world with no one to advise him; his reputation injured, and deeply injured, by his father's alleged crime. He knew he once had an uncle, a brother of his father, but he had gone to South America several years ago, and they had not heard from him nor of him since. Whether he had been shipwrecked, or had died in a foreign land, or whether still alive, he knew not. Matters were at this crisis, when he bade a lasting farewell to Old England, and sailed for America. In the town of S— he met with Don Seville, and engaged with him as an assistant on the farm. There he had been ever since a period of two years, and had become a favorite in the family.

Sophie Bright was a plain-looking, plain-going country girl, and had little to say at any time apart from household affairs. She always used her best endeavors to please, and generally succeeded, as her mistress, being a woman of superior qualities, was not over fastidious.

Olivier Melodine, Arabella's father, was Don Zeres' nearest neighbor to the west. As before stated, he was a Frenchman. He had located there just one year prior to Don Zeres. His farm was known by the name of "Rosemont," and was similar in appearance to "Seville Place." His household consisted besides himself, of Rosalind his wife, Arabella, and a colored servant, Jake by name. Mr. Melodine had managed to battle against the hard times that had involved so many of his neighbors and was now in very comfortable circumstances.

Jake was a rather eccentric individual, and had a peculiar dialect. He, like many others, had his own style of language. He prided himself, in his leisure moments, in teasing Arabella. He would say, "when young Massa Seville and Miss Abella got spliced for shu the year of jubilee hab come," and he was certain "Abella would get as white's an angel when the preacher was splicing them, she was so timid." Such sayings would emanate from him with so much gravity that you would really think he meant every word of gospel. He once made an attempt at flattery by telling Arabella, "He was shu she was better lookin' than the Queen of England,

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