

cause I should have had to sit there till midnight at least, and that I could not well do, having to call on Dick and then go home to dress for the evening. So I cut short Ned's excited inquiries and extravagant joy, and got him to keep quiet for one minute, while I gave him to understand that I and Dick should call for him with the carriage on our way to Marston Hall. Westfield was no less surprised than I had been at this unexpected turn of affairs, for though the Marstons had renewed their intercourse with his family, he had thought it wise to keep out of the old gentleman's sight till the memory of his misdeeds should somewhat fade away from his mind. He thoroughly entered into the spirit of the affair however, and vowed eternal amiability to the whole family at the Hall.

At home, I found they either knew or guessed something of the matter, for I met my sister half-way down the avenue, anxious to know whether I brought her a note from Julia or not. I handed her the scented epistle (which I had taken care not to show to Ned, or I fear some rash deed had followed,) and begged of her to enlighten me on the matter. But she hypocritically feigned complete ignorance, though the smiles that lighted up her face told another story.

Well, to make a long story short, Dick and I called for Ned, and found him dressed most carefully and superbly. He must have spent almost all the time that elapsed between my afternoon call and six o'clock in dressing for this eventful occasion. As seven struck, we three entered the drawing-room at Marston Hall, and were received most affably by Mr. Marston himself, who was alone in the apartment. This, I fancy, he had arranged purposely, so as to enable Ned, who was at first terribly embarrassed, to throw off his uneasiness at his novel and unexpected position, and be master of himself before Julia and her mother entered the room, which they did soon after. Oh how Dick did grin when he saw Gray attempting to put on an unconcerned look as he shook hands with his "*inamorata*," and his utter failure. Then at dinner, where he did not sit next, but opposite to her, he became painfully conscious towards the end of the meal, that his "*aparte*" looks were no more