

pidity of his return, and he admired Ellen more than he had ever admired her in his life.

"Where to, sir?" his brand-new chauffeur asked.

Burton pitched away his cigar.

"Wait a moment," he said, and turning round, walked with firm footsteps back to the house. He tried the door and opened it, looked into the parlor and found it empty. He walked down the passage and pushed open the door of the kitchen. Little Alfred's meal was ready on a tray, the room was spotless and shining, but Ellen, with her head buried in her hands, was leaning forward in her chair, sobbing. He suddenly fell on his knees by her side.

"Please forgive me, Ellen!" he cried, almost sobbing himself. "Please forgive me for being such a rotter. I'll never—I promise that I'll never do anything of the sort again."

She looked up. He ventured to put his arm around her waist. She shook herself free, very weakly. He tried again and with success.

"I know I've made an idiot of myself," he went on. "I'd no right to come down here like that. I just want you to forgive me now, that's all. I didn't mean to swagger about being rich. I'm not enjoying it a bit till you come along."

Ellen raised her head once more. Her lips were quivering, half with a smile, although the tears were still in her eyes.