

CHAPTER III.

IT WAS the nineteenth of December. Clifford was sitting in his study at "Falun" when the letters were brought to him. He did not look up from his work. The postman could bring him nothing that he cared to have that day: for he had already heard from Alan, who was still at school: he knew that all was well with the boy and that he would be home for the holidays on the twenty-first.

For nearly four months now he had waited and longed for a letter from Katharine. But now he had given up hoping. He believed that he had alienated her by his merciless outspokenness up at Peer Gynt's stue; not at the moment, for he remembered the ring in her voice and the expression on her face when she said: "*Judge you—judge you,*" but later, when, quietly by herself, in her own surroundings, away from him, she was able to think things out and measure them. She had judged him—and left him. He suffered. He dared not attempt to approach her. He had told her all—and her answer was silence. He haunted Westminster and Stangate; but he never met her once. He walked up and down Westminster Bridge, knowing that if he did see her in the distance, he would be constrained to turn away. For he had told her all; and since her answer was silence, he had no right to force himself on her.