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### CHAPTER III.

#### LADY NORAH.

He and the squire and the rector  
clustered round her to say good-night,  
and Lord Ferndale held her hand for  
quite a long time.

"Lady Ferndale will be so glad to  
come and see you, Lady Norah," he  
said.

Guidford Berton was the last to  
come up, and he took her hand with  
just the two words, "Good-night."

Norah thought it was funny, that  
she was tired, and over-strained, but  
it seemed to her that his long, thin  
fingers struck a chill to her, and she  
began to think that she understood  
Lord Ferndale's vague dislike or  
suspicion of the young man who was  
the son of her father's steward, and  
who was "so clever."

The earl, with all the courtesy for  
which he was famous, accompanied  
his guests to the hall, and bowed  
them; then Norah heard him return-  
ing, and her heart beat fast.

"At last they were alone. What  
would he say to her?"

He came into the room, and looked  
at her as she stood, tall and slimly  
graceful.

"I am afraid you are tired," he  
said, in his soft, restrained voice.

"Too tired to converse to-night. In-  
deed, I do not think we have much  
to say. The past—your past—has  
been left behind to-day; you start on  
a fresh, new life. Hitherto you have  
been simply Norah—Frere—Frere  
was the name, I think? Henceforth  
you are Lady Norah Arrowdale, and  
my daughter; and this will be your  
home. I trust you will be happy. If  
there should be anything you desire,  
anything I can do to insure your  
comfort, pray do not hesitate to in-  
form me of it, Norah."

"Thank you—papa," she responded.

The last word dropped from her  
lips softly, in a voice that would  
have melted most men; but if it  
touched the Right Honorable, the  
Earl of Arrowdale, he concealed any  
emotion most successfully.

"You must not let me keep you  
from repose," he said. "Good-night."

He held out his hand, and as she  
put her small, soft one into it, she  
leaned forward a little. A word, a  
gesture, and she would have thrown  
herself upon his breast, but he just  
bent forward and touched her fore-  
head with his lips.

"Good-night," he said, almost as if  
he feared she would make "a scene."

"Allow me to ring for your maid."

He rang, held the door open for  
her, and inclined his head, just as  
he would have done to a guest, and  
she passed out.

With her eyes moist, but her head  
and figure were erect, for she was  
still resolved to show no sign, she  
went up the broad stairs. At the top,  
when she had gained the wide corri-  
dor which ran round the vast hall,  
she paused, confused by the number  
of doors and their similarity, and as  
she hesitated, wondering which was  
her room, a woman dressed in black,  
came toward her. She was a woman  
approaching middle age, with a sob-  
er-looking subdued manner.

"This is your ladyship's room," she  
said, opening a door.

Norah thanked her, and entered,  
and the woman followed her.

"I am your ladyship's servant," she  
exclaimed, and she stood respect-  
fully attentive.

Norah colored slightly.

"You are my lady's maid?" she  
said; then she smiled. "I have never  
had one before, and scarcely know  
what you can do for me that I can-  
not do myself."

"Your ladyship will let me help  
you undress and brush your hair,"  
she replied.

Norah shrugged her shoulders and  
smiled again.

"Thank you," she said. "It will  
seem strange at first."

"Yes, my lady," she assented, re-  
spectfully, as she removed Norah's  
dress and began to unfasten her hair.

Norah sat before the glass, lost in  
thought for a few minutes, then sud-  
denly raising her eyes, she found her  
new maid's fixed upon her with  
strange intently.

"Why do you look at me so intently?"  
she asked, in her frank way.

The maid colored.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon,"  
she said, in a low voice. "I was  
thinking—but I may offend your lady-  
ship."

"I was thinking—" She stopped  
again. "I was thinking of the coun-  
tees, your mother, Lady Norah."

"You—know—her?" said Norah, at-

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taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable  
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flu and had a very bad weakness.  
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and used the Sanative Wash also Dr.  
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am much better in every way. I am  
willing for you to use my letter as a  
testimonial as I recommend your  
medicines." —Mrs. IRENE NELSON,  
Kessock, Sask.

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woman is forced to give up her work  
on account of ill health. It is quite as  
often the woman who does her own  
work at home. When backaches and  
headaches drive out all ambition, when  
that bearing-down sensation attacks  
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pound.

most inaudibly.

"Yes, my lady, I was here in ser-  
vice when her ladyship was here, and  
sometimes I was her maid."

Norah sighed.

"And what were you thinking—that  
I reminded you of her?"

The woman looked confused.

"No, my lady," she said at last.

"You are not like her ladyship in  
any way," and she glanced at the  
lovely face reflected in the glass.

Norah sighed again.

"What is your name?" she asked.

"Harman, my lady."

Norah said no more, and Harman  
brushed the wealth of golden-brown  
hair in careful silence. Then she  
helped Norah into her dressing gown.

"I sleep in the next room but two  
to your suite, my lady," she said, "and  
this bell communicates with it."

Norah dismissed her and leaned  
back in the chair. Tired as she was  
—or perhaps because she was so  
tired—she felt that she could not  
sleep, and she sat with half-closed  
eyes and recalled all the incidents of  
the evening. It all seemed like  
a dream to her, and as if the vast  
house and all belonging to it would  
fade away and leave her in her own  
little room at Cliff Cottage.

Presently she got up and went  
round the room and into an adjoining  
one, which was furnished as a bou-  
doir in pale blue satin with amber  
hangings. She had read of such  
rooms, but had never imagined that  
she should ever live in them, and for  
a time she was lost in a kind of  
wonder at the beauty and luxury of  
her surroundings. Then suddenly a  
sound broke the silence. It was the  
first timid "jug, jug" of a nightin-  
gale.

Norah stood and listened, and the  
note grew more confident and thrill-  
ing. It seemed to fill the whole air  
with delicious music. She went to  
the window and drew aside the cur-  
tains of India muslin, and instantly  
the light of a full moon flooded the  
room. Norah looked out upon a view  
which would have stirred a painter  
to enthusiasm, and a long sigh of  
admiration and delight broke from  
her lips. Moved by an irresistible  
impulse, she unfastened the window.

It was a French one extending to the  
ground, and she found that it opened  
on to a balcony, or terrace. Stepping

out, she leaned over and looked  
down.

Immediately below her was the  
terrace which ran along the whole  
length of the front and one side of  
the house. The balcony, as she had  
thought it, was also a higher terrace,  
connected with the lower one by a  
flight of stone steps, so that she could  
walk from the upper to the lower  
terrace. She did walk to the head  
of the steps and looked down. All  
was silent, and there were no lights  
in the windows; and, enraptured by  
the beauty of the scene, she stood lost  
in thought which is less than thought,  
looking before her absently, and list-  
ening to the nightingale.

Yes, it was surely all a dream, and  
this the most beautiful part was the  
beginning of the transaction scene  
and the awakening! Indeed, a trans-  
formation of a sort was being up  
toward the moon, reached the edge of  
it and slowly veiled over and clouded  
it.

Instantly, where light had reigned  
triumphant a moment before, all was  
dark with a darkness made more in-  
tense by the preceding intense light.

Norah stood with her arms resting  
upon the stone balustrade, her eyes  
fixed upon the spot where the moon  
was hidden, and there floated across  
her mind Juliet's well-known lines.

All unconsciously murmured them:

Oh, swear not by the moon, the in-  
constant moon,  
That monthly changes in her cir-  
cled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise  
variable.

Instantly there came back upon the  
night air Romeo's response, uttered  
in a grave and musical voice close  
beside her:

What shall I swear by?

For a moment Norah thought that  
it was a trick of memory and imagina-  
tion, then, with a start, she shrank  
back and stared in the darkness in  
the direction from which the voice  
had proceeded.

She could see, hear nothing, and  
yet she was sure now that she had  
heard the familiar lines in response  
to hers, and that the person who had  
spoken it was close beside her.

Norah did not lack courage, and  
even in the first moment of surprise,  
she was not alarmed. Who could it  
be that had taken up the verse? It  
was not the earl's voice, but a young-  
er and more musical one. Could  
there be some one staying in the  
house whom she had not seen, some  
one who had been tempted out, as she  
had been, by the beauty of the night?

Her heart beat fast, and she was  
about to do the wisest thing she could  
under the circumstances—steal back  
to her room—when the voice spoke  
again.

"Are you going right through the  
play, Jack?" it said, in a tone of in-  
dolent amusement. "You imitate  
Juliet's voice very nicely; but don't  
talk too loudly, or we shall be over-  
heard, and some faithful retainer of  
the noble house will discharge the  
too common revolver at us. Eh?" he  
seemed to wait for a response, then  
went on: "Yes, that's right, hold  
your tongue; it's the safest course  
if you can't refrain from spouting  
Shakespeare. What a lovely night!"

(To be continued.)

DISAPPOINTMENT

Husband—Have you had a pleasant  
afternoon?

Wife—No, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mrs.  
Jenkinson came together and left to-  
gether. I had a lot of things about  
Mrs. Wilkinson. I wanted to tell Mrs.  
Jenkinson, and I had a lot of things  
about Mrs. Jenkinson that I wanted to  
tell Mrs. Wilkinson, but of course  
when they were both there together it  
was impossible!

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

THEIR happy paths that side by side,  
I went smoothly on, at last divided!  
And now, with tender, fond delays,  
Here, at the parting of the ways,  
With long farewells, and hand in  
hand,

The lovers stand!

Once more they seem to tread again  
The green, sequestered, quiet lane,  
The banks by which the river ran,  
And, where the leafy woods began,  
The track—just wide enough for  
two—

Their footsteps knew!

They think, with heart to beating  
heart,  
How soon their lives must drift apart!  
Her faltering tones, his looks declare  
A truth that meets us everywhere,  
That joy, though sweet, is at the best  
A transient guest!

Duty, whose promptings fill our days,  
Stands at the parting of the ways!  
Follow its guidance unafraid,  
And keep, true lover and fair maid,  
In hope and patience close at heart,  
Though far apart!

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