

Bertie should be left together upon the island. I hoped that the boy would make love to her—but he was too inexperienced; and you, by that time, were resolved to think no ill of her. You married her, and I knew that my power at Torresmuir would soon come to an end.

"I did my best again, however, and partly succeeded. I fostered Molly's love for Hannington, and devised their elopement. I took the jewels and papers from your bureau, and dropped Molly's ring into one of the drawers—as Bertie can testify. That action would effectually bar her return, I thought, to Torresmuir. But your wife once more defeated me. She threw discredit on my character: she led Bertie to confess his escapades, and Molly—indirectly—to ask your pardon; and although I told you the story of her previous engagement to Hannington and took care that you should see her letters to him, I knew that she would conquer in the end. The period of coldness between you lasted longer than I expected; but when I saw that you were reconciled, that Bertie had got under young Rutherford's influence, that Molly was back at Torresmuir, and that Hannington was expected—why then; I felt that the game was lost. If Hannington were to come and to find out that he and his wife had been suspected of robbery, I knew that he would fly into a rage and tell you a good deal more about me than you had ever dreamt of. He knew of two or three little transactions which I had hitherto carefully kept from your ears: and if these were to be revealed, it seemed to me that I would rather be out of the way. Bertie's scrapes, too, were partially known to Hannington, and I did not quite like the idea of your hearing that I had been responsible for most of them—as he would doubtless have informed you. In the matter of the cheque, it is perhaps only fair to say—as I wish to do the handsome thing by you all in leaving the country—that Bertie was little to blame. He had had considerable pressure put upon him, and he was so frightened of yourself, that he thought anything preferable to telling you the truth.

"The game being up, then, I prepared for departure. What I did not reckon on was coming face to face with Hannington in the lane that leads to Tomgarrow. He was in a tremendous rage over the story of the robbery, which Lady Valencia Gilderoy had told him, and accused