

hidden by a veil, but the eyes of youth shone through it; and her fresh and delicate voice was the voice of a young girl.

“Jackson,” he said to his servant, “you and this lady’s maid must arrange about having some breakfast sent out to her from the inn. Here’s the carriage,” he added. “You had better put the bags in first. Alistair, will you show Jackson which things you want to take with you?”

Whilst his friend and the servant were acting on these instructions, he turned again to the young lady. “If I were you,” he said, “I would make them give you some eggs. The bacon is not to be recommended. And don’t be impatient with the pepper-pot. You will have to hit it hard if you want to get anything out of it. Perhaps before I go—I see they’re not ready yet—you will let me make myself useful by brushing away these bread-crumbs.”

She looked at him for an instant. “Please,” she said, “don’t trouble.”

There was something in her manner which told him that her ease was giving place to shyness. At once by a subtle gradation his own manner grew more formal. “Excuse me,” he said, “for a second;” and went out to the carriage. He came back almost directly having in his hand a novel. “You’ve two hours to wait,” he said. “May I give you this to help you to beguile your time? It’s a book which when once you’ve begun it, you must read to the end; and which no one who has read it to the end can ever open again. As I’ve read it to the end myself, it’s quite worthless to me; and so, if I may make a present of it, its value need not embarrass you.”

Her natural manner returned to her. She took the book laughing. “Thank you,” she said, “very much. I’ve not read a novel for weeks. I’ve been having a rest cure, and am now going to finish it by the sea.”

He gave her a look of inquiry, as though he would question her farther; but checked himself, raised his hat, and, wishing her good-bye, turned away from her. Whilst, however, he was standing by the wicket, waiting to enter the carriage, he