

severe cold, and might die, perhaps! The thought of that exquisite girl cut off in the flower of her youth and beauty drove me nearly distracted, and it also opened my eyes; and I knew myself to be deeply and irrevocably in love with her. The following day I called again, and again received the same answer. Could I see the General or some member of the family? The man was sorry, but his orders had been strict—the family were unable to see anyone.

As I walked disconsolately away, I met Frazer and told him my trouble.

"She must be very ill. You are a clergyman—perhaps they would see you. Will you go at once?"

"Certainly not. I am not in the habit of forcing myself where I am not wanted."

"But you may be wanted for all you know."

"Then they will send for me. You seem very anxious for—for a stranger," he said, suddenly.

Something in my face revealed the truth to him.

"Goodness," he muttered, "you too"! I don't know which face depicted the greatest consternation. Evidently we were rivals.

"What a fatality" he continued hoarsely.

"Egmont, take my advice and go away at once, in kindness to yourself and—to them."

"You are very complimentary" I said angrily.

"I neither mean to be complimentary or the reverse. I speak to save you and them pain."

"You are too kind—too modest" said I ironically. "What you mean to say is, I suppose, that you were first in the field? All the same I shall try my luck: thanks." And I walked quickly away.

But it was the last straw. I went home

and wrote General Houghton a note, imploring him to see me. I received an answer in the affirmative.

Is there indeed such a thing as second sight? I believed so without doubt as I approached the house. And I thought the servant's face, as he admitted me, reflected the gloom in my own.

"Can you ever forgive me? I shall never be able to forgive myself." I said, as I noticed how care worn the General looked.

"We were equally to blame. We should have watched her more closely."

This implied reproach to Miss Houghton was more than I could bear.

"Surely you blame her too severely? I am the one—."

"Stop!" he cried "you misunderstand me. I have something to tell you." He paused, unable to proceed.

It was coming. He was going to tell me of her engagement to Frazer.

"Wait," I exclaimed eagerly. I would at least have the satisfaction of speaking first. "I have come to ask Miss Houghton to be my wife—with your permission?"

"Goodness!" he said faintly "another victim!"

A fear of I knew not what overcame me and kept me silent.

"You never suspected then?" he asked after what seemed an interminable pause. I was going to say something about Frazer, when he continued—

"You thought it was accidental—her falling into the water? *She threw herself in.*"

I could only gaze at him in speechless horror.

"Water has a fascination for her she cannot resist. Yet when living within sight of it, she is quieter than at any other time."