

"Miss Huntingdon, Sir George Leland. Believe me, Sir George, nothing short of the friendly regard we entertain for you, and the great anxiety you have expressed to become personally acquainted with my daughter, would have induced me to depart from the rigid rule I have hitherto enforced, that she should be introduced to no strangers during her sojourn this season in London."

In Sir George, Eva recognized the gallant young gentleman, whom she had perceived a moment before in the porch, and the opinion she had formed of him then, was not altered by his subsequent conduct. With a slight bow to the new comer, he turned to his hostess, exclaiming:

"She looks a little like 'Gustus.—Does she not!'"

"I see no resemblance whatever," was the icy reply. "Augustus has dark hair and eyes—Miss Huntingdon is a decided blonde."

"Blonde or not," persisted Sir George, "the style of feature is the same."

Lady Huntingdon's pencilled brows contracted, but she betrayed no further signs of displeasure.

"Of course she sings and plays!" he asked after another pause.

"Miss Huntingdon neither sings nor plays," rejoined her ladyship, laying particular stress on her daughter's title.

"No! Why I thought that all young ladies now-a-days, both sang and played. She is quite a rarity."

"I fear, Miss Huntingdon finds your remarks rather personal, Sir George," rejoined lady Huntingdon, in a tone whose haughtiness there was no misinterpreting. Sir George glanced curiously at Eva's crimsoning face, and muttering something about "unintentional offence," sprang from his seat and walked towards the window. After studying the prospect from it for some time, he turned again to lady Huntingdon, and addressed his conversation exclusively to her, bestowing no more notice or attention on Eva than if she were a statue. Keenly did the latter feel this neglect, accustomed as she was to the high-bred politeness of Mr. Arlingford, who kind and attentive at all times, was, if possible, doubly courteous in her mother's presence. Comparisons most unfavourable to Sir George, did she mentally institute between them, and equally did he suffer when placed in the balance with her other friend, the gay and chivalrous unknown. After a tedious half hour, the Baronet took his leave, and lady Huntingdon turning to her companion, languidly inquired:

"If she admired Sir George!"

"No," murmured Eva.

"Well, neither do I, but be polite to him—he is your father's ward. You had better return to your studies now. They must never on any account be neglected."

Eva willingly obeyed, breathing a secret wish that her first interview with Sir George might be also her last. With a satisfaction very different to the listlessness with which she had listened to the intimation a few days previous, Eva received Mrs. Wentworth's next mandate to prepare for a drive, nor was her satisfaction undiminished when she heard the orders given, "to the Park," though she had no expectation of meeting the stranger there again. She was agreeably disappointed, however, for almost the first individual on whom her glance rested was the latter, and the instant he perceived the carriage, he turned out of his former path and advanced slowly towards them. How tumultuously did her heart suddenly beat, how rapidly did her colour vary, as a second glance towards him, revealed to her, placed conspicuously on his breast, a faded yellow flower—the flower she had cast away, and which he had kept and cherished till then. One moment their eyes met. His were full of eager joy, of respectful devotion, hers spoke ——— consciousness!—consciousness, plainly revealed, too, in her varying colour, in the nervous precipitation with which she instantly averted her glance. The stranger gazed after the carriage till it was nearly out of sight, and then with a smiling lip pursued his path. His end was gained. Eva knew, recognized him, and already a secret understanding, an understanding of which no one was cognizant, which no one could chide, was established between them. The remainder of the drive passed to Eva with the rapidity of lightning, so cheerful, so confusedly happy, were her thoughts; and even her own apartment, the apartment whose dullness she had so often reprobated, seemed bright and pleasant on her entrance. To add the climax to her happiness, the first object that met her view on approaching her table was a letter, the address of which she instantly recognized as the handwriting of Mr. Arlingford.

"Oh! this is too much happiness! she murmured, pressing it to her lips. "Remembered, befriended by both. Surely, I am too blessed, too fortunate!"

With joyful impatience she broke the seal, and more than once did she pause to dash from her eyes the glittering tears that constantly gushed to them. The letter was no elaborate masterpiece of eloquence, intended merely by the writer to display his epistolary talents, but written with