

"And Vivienne has met her father," pursued Mrs. Colonibel, "and it has been discovered that Uncle Colonel trumped up a charge of stealing against Mr. Delavigne because he wished to get rid of him."

"I can well believe it," said Judy contemptuously. "I have never had a great opinion of Uncle Colonel."

"And in spite of this, Mr. Delavigne says he will allow his daughter to marry Stanton, and yet Brian sends me word that the whole thing is at an end. Who has done it? What does it mean?"

Camperdown pointed a finger at Armour's unhappy figure.

"The family will be broken up," exclaimed Mrs. Colonibel, sinking into a chair and putting up her hands to hide her miserable face.

"Stanton, old man, where are you?" and gropingly feeling his way into the room came Valentine, exquisitely dressed and unruffled in appearance. "I hear flying rumors, that knowing you as well as I do, I cannot believe. The happiness that you have so long deserved is now within your grasp. You are not going to ruin your chances?" and he threw his arm over his brother's shoulder.

Armour, like a hunted animal brought to bay, looked desperately at the faces round about him. "I have a conscience," he said brokenly; "I cannot do this thing."