

vince me that my poor little Ariadne was shedding many desperate tears in secret over her desertion.

On my way home I looked in on my doctor. His name is Hunnington. He grasped me by the hand and eagerly inquired whether my pain was worse. I said it was not. He professed delight, but looked disappointed. I ought to have replied in the affirmative. It is so easy to make others happy.

I dined, read a novel, and went to sleep in the cheerful frame of mind induced by the consciousness of having made some little progress on the path of eumoiriety.

The next morning Dale made his customary appearance. He wore a morning coat, a dark tie, and patent-leather boots.

"Well," said I, "have you dressed more carefully to-day?"

He looked himself anxiously over and inquired whether there was anything wrong. I assured him of the impeccability of his attire, and commented on its splendour.

"Are you going to take Maisie out to lunch?"

He started and reddened beneath his dark skin. Before he could speak I laid my hand on his shoulder.

"I'm an old friend, Dale. You mustn't be angry with me. But don't you think you're treating Maisie rather badly?"

"You've no right to say so," he burst out hotly. "No one has the right to say so. There never was a question of an engagement between Maisie and myself."

"Then there ought to have been," I said judicially. "No decent man plays fast and loose with a girl and throws her over just at the moment when he ought to be asking her to marry him."

"I suppose my mother's been at you. That's what she wanted to see you about yesterday. I wish to God she would mind her own business."