

"Augustus, your father certainly is right. There is no supporting, no enduring your extravagance. Really, if you go on in this way, I too, will cease to conceal or defend your follies."

"So be it, I will not question your decision; but then, of course, I will consider myself released from any trifling promises I may have given at different times to your ladyship."

"As it is, you have already broken them a hundred and a hundred times," was the angry retort of his companion, who always forgot her usual elegant listlessness of manner, during interviews with her son. "However, that has nothing to do with the present question. You have contracted fresh debts, for their liquidation, you must apply to your father, I can be of no service whatever."

"None, beyond breaking the matter to the old gentleman, and coaxing or scolding him into paying up the requisite amount. I really hate to have any intercourse with him on pecuniary matters, for, as you yourself have often said, he is so sordid, so narrow minded, on such points. 'Tis more than the exquisite sensitiveness of my feelings can stand."

As the young man concluded this speech, he caught up a billiard ball and discharged it with unerring aim at a marble representation of Niobe, in a niche opposite.

"Capital shot!" he triumphantly exclaimed, as the upper lip of the statue fell to the ground. "There, the old lady has got something at last to weep for."

Lady Huntingdon, heeding neither the action nor the words, still sat silent, her brow contracted in deep, anxious thought. At length she exclaimed:

"Well, Augustus, I will again use my influence with your father: but remember, not a word of Askham's debt, at least of the manner in which it was contracted."

"No, say it was incurred in giving donations to hospitals—restoring worthy distressed families to former comforts, or sending Bibles to the little heathens—such deeds being so much in the line of the honorable Augustus Huntingdon."

Spite of her anxieties, lady Huntingdon smiled, and as he sprang through the window on the lawn, gracefully waving his cap in farewell, she murmured with a proud smile:

"Dear boy! what spirits, what manliness! How impossible to feel angered by his little follies!"

She then sought her husband, and by dint of entreaties, and concessions, which no other power on earth could have extorted from her, obtained his promise again to discharge the debts of his

reckless son. The latter, meanwhile, secure in his mother's intercession, left the house, and calling his dogs to him, plunged into the woods, where he amused himself till the following twilight compelled him to return to his home. Tossing his game bag at the head of Fleury, the French cook, whom he encountered in the hall, with a polite injunction from him, "to give them something out of it, instead of his usual cursed uneatable *fricassées*," he dashed up the stairs into his own room, where he immediately entered on the task of cleaning his gun, a duty he considered too sacred, too important, to be entrusted even to his own confidential servant. After receiving the third summons to dinner, he impatiently flung aside the weapon, and hurried down as he was, his dress travel-stained, his fine hair all disordered. On entering the dining room, he accosted lord Huntingdon with a little more deference than he had exhibited during the morning interview with his mother, but still the careless, "Well, father. Happy to see you. Hope you are well?" proved far from satisfactory, and lady Huntingdon hastened to anticipate the angry rejoinder, rising to her husband's lips, by exclaiming with a slightly reproachful glance at his careless dress:

"We will excuse your negligent toilette to-day, Augustus, in consideration of your late return."

Augustus repressed, with some effort, the pert rejoinder that occurred to him, and as soon as the dessert was placed on the table, muttered something about pressing letters, and precipitately left the room.

"The unmannerly cub!" was lord Huntingdon's indignant apostrophe.

His wife laughingly stared at him, but suddenly remembering that the bills were yet to be paid, she rejoined with as much gentleness as she could command:

"He is indeed rather thoughtless, but remember, my dear Huntingdon, he is only nineteen."

"Only nineteen, madam! Why, had I ventured on such conduct in my father's house, at nineteen, or seventeen, or any age, I would have been kicked out, or what is as bad, cut off with a shilling."

"But, you could not have been cut off the entailed estates, my lord."

Lord Huntingdon understood the triumphant though covert smile that played round his wife's proud lip, and he angrily rejoined.

"No, Madam, but the entailed estates could have been mismanaged, mortgaged, until they were not worth a shilling, as I will do for your precious son if he does not look to himself!"

Lady Huntingdon restrained the deep passion that shook her frame, as she calmly replied: