

MY BEARDED MAID

would be less likely to regard me as a child if my face had more character. People speak of the strength of a jaw, but definite eyebrows do for your face what a broad nib does for your handwriting."

"What did your husband say? Did he not protest?"

"Austen! Poor innocent! He never noticed it; that's just what irritates me so much. Médor, I assure you that, if I had my front teeth knocked out at a bargain sale, I don't think he would notice the difference. Don't shiver, it's not likely to happen. Oh, I am not above the delights of the bargain counter, *mon cher*, but I dread, I loathe, being hemmed in and pressed around by many women. I dislike women, Médor. I like some particular women, but only for something they possess—beauty, tact, or the intelligence of clothes—but, as a sex, I don't like them. Even if I had been a man, I don't think I would have liked women. I would alternately have enjoyed and avoided them. Why do you look cross?"

"Naturally, I look cross. I had always conceived you as a sensible girl, and you tell me nonchalantly that you paint your eyebrows!"

"But how narrowminded of you? Does it show? No! Has it or has it not a pleasing effect? Yes, very well then. You said they looked charming."

"I said no such thing."

"Well, your voice did then. Pleasing things are their own justification. I could understand you being shocked if I used a pencil or a burnt cork, but my touch has been so gradual and natural that no one has noticed it. These are not smudges crudely drawn, and up and down