

Haughton, did she remain long in the supper-room, Baronet?"

"No, she excused herself just as you and Stuart made your exit; one plea, finger hurt; some point of her jewellery entered."

"Which she made a point of and didn't return, eh?"

"No."

"Excuse me," she said quickly, and going to a window giving an open view down into Rose Cottage, and throwing the heavy curtains behind her; the windows of the cottage being all aglow with lights, the interior of parlour and dining-room could be distinctly seen.

"Sir Lionel, come quick! look over there," she cried, giving him the field-glass.

"Great heavens, what does it mean?" he exclaimed.

"Move, Blanche, Lion, one of you, and make room for me quick," cried Vaura, breathlessly.

"No, darling; you had better stay where you are," he said excitedly, forgetting at such a time their companions were ignorant of their engagement.

"Poor Haughton, surely, Lady Everly, you do not consider yonder scene a fitting subject to make game of?"

"Yes and no; if you knew how the poor dear Colonel has been sold, and my poppa before him, you'd say 'tis best. She has been too many for them; yes, it's better ended by an elopement."

"Then my worst fears are realized; and their words were no idle seeming, as I half hoped," said Vaura in quick, nervous tones. "You may as well gratify me, Lion dear, by giving me a glance at how a blot is put upon the escutcheon of a heretofore stainless name," she said despairingly, yet haughtily.

"It will be too much for you, darling; let me take you down stairs; I must go to poor Haughton. We should prevent this."

"You can't and I am glad; I've known it for hours, but I wouldn't let any one know; if you stop them now, what do you gain?"