

He rose from his seat by her side, and paced up and down the room with passionate vehemence.

"Once for all, Kathleen," he said, suddenly stopping before her, "will you be my wife?"

"I am sorry to be obliged to refuse you, my dear cousin, but there are two or three very good reasons that make it necessary to refuse your trifling request."

"For Heaven's sake name them!" he said.

"Well, then, the first is, that this day three weeks I am to be married to Sir John Montford; the second——"

"What! Married! Kathleen!" he gasped, convulsively.

"Yes, sir. But won't you hear the other reasons?" she inquired, in the sweetest possible voice.

"Oh, mock away!" he said, bitterly; "it well becomes you in your hour of triumph; but one thing you know—you *loved me once*. That time has passed. As Kathleen Moore I now bid you good-by—as Lady Montford you will never see me again."

In a moment he was gone, and then parting the curtains I stepped out. Kathleen sat gazing from the door through which he had gone—her face very pale, but a proud look of triumph shining in her eyes.

"Well, Gypsy," she said, with a mocking laugh, "you have heard all. Was it not a delightful little comedy?—almost as pretty as that you and I witnessed last Christmas Eve. And now my romance of life is gone forever; nothing remains for me but flirting, spending Sir John's wealth, tea and scandal. Well, I shall make the most of it. And now, the Christmas queen will be missed—so come."

Three weeks after, Kathleen Moore became the wife of Sir John Montford; and that same day Randal Percy sailed for the United States; and since that time we have never heard of him. Madame and the Marquis de Rochefort dwell in their dear Paris. the gayest of the gay; and Lady Montford flits from place to place, ever restive and dissatisfied, as I suppose she will ever be, until her weary heart is still forever. I, too, no longer the wild "Gypsy" of other days, dwell far from my own loved English home. Many a Christmas Eve has come and gone, and many more will still come, but the old faces and forms will never meet again under the roof-tree of the Percys.