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SUCH A GOOD MAN.

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CHAPTER V.

THE AWAKING.

THE guests were gone.

"Good-night, uncle."

"Good-night, Rose. Stay. I want to speak to you—no—no." A sudden pang touched Sir Jacob's heart. He could not tell her that night. By a certain instinct he knew that Rose and John Gower were of natures so opposed that she could never accept him willingly. Perhaps he suspected something of the real case as regards Julian Carteret. And the girl was so bright and animated that night with the glow of new-born happiness on her cheeks that her uncle shrank from spoiling the sleep of happy us which she would have.

Good-night, Mrs. Sampson."

He was left alone in his big drawing-room. He looked around it with a sigh of relief. Had he then been so near, so very near, the losing all these things? There were the portfolios of water-colour drawings, each worth a thousand pounds. There were the pictures, all of which he fondly believed to be genuine, which he had hung upon the walls; there was the furniture, not ostentatious, but costly; above all there was the

pride of possession, the feeling as he trod on the soft thick carpet that all this was his own, and going to remain his own. As he passed down the stairs to his study an unwonted shudder came upon him, a strange sense of past peril and providential rescue. He had had an uneasy dream as if he was to lose everything, and now that the dream had passed away the recollection was left behind, a painful memory. He would go into the study and have a glass of brandy-and-water with another cigar. He carried in his hands the specifications of the patent and laid them on the table, smoothing them tenderly with something like emotion in his eyes. These papers, these simple drawings, had they come a day later, they would not have been able to save him from destruction. Had they come a week or two earlier, he might have felt strong enough to refuse the young man's terms, if only as a punishment for his audacity. They came not a day too soon, nor a day too late. Was not this, he thought, a special and manifest interposition of Providence? Was it not by a miracle, visible only to himself and to Reuben Gower, that this arm should be stretched out to save when the waters were fast closing over his drowning head? He thought of his great