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been shot off near him unexpectedly.

"Why, yes, ma'am, I am, I don't deny it," he said.

And for a moment he looked as if he were about to unbosom himself of a secret. But he suddenly shook his head, as if conquering the momentary inclination to confession, and said: "There's always a great deal to think about when her Ladyship and her friends come."

Edna knew that this was not what was troubling him. "Does Lord Lockington know about the accident to Mr. Kage?" she asked suddenly, rather by way of fishing in the waters of mystery on the chance of something coming out of them than with any very definite idea. "I—I should think so, ma'am."

This was, she felt, a very strange answer, since Revesby himself being the means of communication between Lord Lockington and the rest of the world, would undoubtedly have been the person to communicate the news to him. The butler seemed to become suddenly sensible of the mistake he had made, and he stood a moment, as if hesitating whether to say anything more. But apparently coming abruptly to the conclusion that he had better leave the matter where it was, he bolted out of the room in a very different manner from his usual sedate gait, leaving Edna in the throes of a great uneasiness.

Before she had come to any conclusion as to the possible reason of the butler's excessive uneasiness and distress, there was a noise of many voices outside, and Lady Lockington and her three guests, who had been conversing on the stairs, all came in together.

They were all talking about the accident, and Lady Lockington appeared to be in a state of the greatest distress about it.

"The poor fellow!" she cried, with a voice which seemed choked with tears. "To think that he should come to grief like that, a man who is the best rider in the county! It's heart-breaking. My dear Linda, I must go over to the Farm the moment we've had breakfast, and see him, and ask what we can do. Will you go with me?"

"Yes, of course we will. We'll both go, both. Dear Tom! Such a handsome fellow as he was too! I do hope he hasn't done anything to disfigure him! It would be too bad, wouldn't it?"

"What is the matter with him?" asked the other lady.

"I think it's a broken leg," replied Lady Lockington, "and other internal injuries besides. That's the worst of it. That may mean anything, you know. But whatever it is, we'll pull him through. I'm a capital nurse, and I'll send for a trained nurse to share the work with me."

"How splendid of you, dear! But you'll find it very trying!"

"Kage ought to think himself a lucky beggar to have you in attendance upon him," said Sir Richard Salesbury. "Would you do as much for me, Lady Lockington?"

"Really I don't know whether I would, Dicky."

"Of course she wouldn't, Dicky. You only take second place when Tom Kage is about, you know," said one of the others.

"Well, you'll have to treat me well, you two, or I won't run on any of your errands while Lady Lockington's away nursing Kage," said Dicky, not quite pleased by the frankness of their estimate of his attractions compared with those of the handsome Tom Kage.

"Oh, of course we shan't stay if Emmeline is going away," said one of them. "We'll just wait to hear the report, dear, and if it's as bad as they say and you don't come back to luncheon, we'll take ourselves off."

Edna was scarcely noticed by anybody in the general excitement, so she lingered about the ground-floor of the house until the news should be brought to the guests concerning the condition of the invalid.

Lady Lockington bade them farewell, indeed, as if she had made up her mind that she would not see them again; and it was decided that the lady who went with her should bring back the report as to the patient's condition and his chances of an early recovery.

Edna thought it strange that no idea of sending a message to her husband about this proceeding on her part should have entered Lady Lockington's head; but the next moment she reflected that

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