

the dethroned statesman there went up an inarticulate cry to the God Who had made him, for that God to spare his only son whom he loved. If only Archie could be saved this present humiliation would count as nothing: it was Archie, and Archie alone, that really mattered. Yet the old preacher had said that God would deal with his firstborn as he had dealt with the firstborn of the gipsy widow-woman. The firstborn of the gipsy had perished upon the gallows, cursed of God and man, and it was all his fault. How could he expect Almighty Justice to show mercy to Archie, when his own mercilessness towards the son of the widow had brought about such terrible results? No; as he had sowed, so must he reap—and bitter indeed would be the harvest!

As Sir Conrad was thus brooding in blank despair, his wife came into the room—the one human being who had never failed him nor disappointed him since he saw her first; but who had loved him with unceasing devotion and obeyed him with unquestioning docility all the long years of their married life. And the broken heart of the man cried out to her for the consolation which no one but a true wife can give.

“Griselda, comfort me; my heart is broken!”

Lady Clayton sat down beside her husband, and stroked his hand.

“Dearest, do not take it to heart in this way. The country has lost its head; but it will find it again, never fear, and will then see what a fool it has made of itself.”

“No, Griselda: it is I who have been the fool—not the country. And by trying to be too clever, which is the most arrant folly of all.”

“My dear love, you are worn out and over-wrought. We will go abroad for a time—you and I and the children—and will forget all the worries and disappointments of this wearying political life. After all, my own, we have each other and the children left; so let us turn our backs upon