

been good to me, and I am truly grateful but—I can't put back that clock, my child. How old do you think I am ? ”

“ I never thought about your age,” I said. “ What do years matter when one is in good accord ? ”

“ And you think we are that, Rosaleen ? In good accord ? By heavens, it is a phrase that commends itself ! And it is true. We have been the best of comrades, of friends. Was ever pupil so docile ; was ever listener so patient ! ”

“ But I loved to be taught ; and I love to listen—to you,” I added softly.

“ My child of grace and glory ! ” he said. “ You are a dangerous temptation, and you are too innocent to know it. I think it would content you if this charmed pause of life could continue. If we might meet and part with hope of other meetings, and other partings, as the years drifted agewards. But though I am a fool and a philosopher, I am a man, and I have a man's heart, and that is a selfish exacting thing, my child. It cries, ‘ the little more and—how much it is. ’ ”

He dropped my hands and turned aside, and looked at that pile of manuscript lying on his chair.

“ You have not told me what she said, and you promised you would ? ”

“ Read it for yourself, Rosaleen.”

I took up the numbers, and found the last, and turned to that final page. I read this :

*“ She looked at him with her child's eyes. She turned to him with her woman's heart, and gave her life into his keeping. From the first hour of their meeting there had been no one worthy to compare with him—The Master.”*

I remember that the paper fell from my hands to the chair. I remember the sound of rustling pages, the scent of violets pressed and withered, but sweet with hues of life and fragrance of spring to me. I remember a rush of tears and a sob, and the clasp of an arm tender, strong, protecting. And above all I remember words, broken and sweet, and for once simple of meaning.

“ Is it true, my dark Rosaleen ? A child's love, but a woman's heart for the Fool Errant, or for the man who loves you ? ”