

The old man took out his card-case, and on the back of his card scribbled a most cordial invitation to Hardwick, asking him to call on him. He handed this to Jennie, and said,—

“Tell Mr. Hardwick that I shall be pleased to see him at any time.”

“And now,” said Lord Donal, “you must let us both escort you home in the carriage.”

“No, no. I shall take a hansom, and will go directly to the office of the *Bugle*, for Mr. Hardwick will be there by this time.”

“But we can drive you there.”

“No, please.”

She held out her hand to Sir James and said, with the least bit of hesitation before uttering the last word, “Good night—uncle.”

“Good-night, my dear,” said the old man, “and God bless you,” he added with a tenderness which his appearance, so solemn and stately, left one unprepared for.

Lord Donal saw his betrothed into a hansom, protesting all the while at thus having to allow her to go off unprotected.

“What an old darling he is,” murmured Jennie, ignoring his protests. “I think if Mr. Hardwick had allowed me to look after the interests of the