

me ;' and in order to change the subject she added, 'Are you home for long, Colonel Fleming ?'

'I hardly know ; it depends very much upon my health. I am home on sick leave.'

And then Juliet looked up at him with a sudden pang.

'You are ill !' she exclaimed falteringly, and for the first time he heard her voice with its natural ring. 'How selfish of me not to have asked you before ! Yes, you look ill. What is the matter ? have you had good advice ?'

'It is nothing now,' he answered, smiling at her with one of his old, half-tender smiles. 'I have had a bad fever, but I am much better ; I dare say a few months at home will set me up again completely.'

They had reached Grosvenor Street by this time.

'You will come in and have some lunch, and see Cis, won't you, Colonel Fleming ?' said Juliet, as she stopped at her own door.

Hugh Fleming stood for a moment half uncertain—he looked away down the street and then back again into the beautiful face he had loved so long and so often yearned to see, and could find no good reason why he should not go into her house, and a great many reasons why he should. He was on the point of accepting her invitation, when a slight noise in the balcony above caused him to glance up. Lord George Mannersley had pushed aside the muslim draperies of the open window, and stepped out for a minute among the geranium and fuschia-pots to look down upon them.

Lord George Mannersley was evidently at home in Mrs. Travers's drawing-room : he had probably an appointment to see her, and was waiting for her to come in. Colonel Fleming did not know that Mrs. Dalmaine was also ensconced up-stairs.

He lifted his hat very coolly to Mrs. Travers. 'Thank you, not to-day, I think ; I shall hope to call upon you some day soon, when I may possibly be fortunate enough to find you disengaged ;' and with a slight bow he left her.

Juliet, who had noted his upward glance, went into the house with a smile that was almost triumphant upon her face.

There is not a woman born, I believe, who can resist the temptation of making the man she loves jealous. It is a dangerous game, but women have this much, if no

more, in common with 'fools,' that they 'delight in playing with edged tools.' The man may adore her, be devoted to her, spend his life in her service, and she may know it perfectly—but if she can make him jealous, she will do it. Her power over him seems to her to be incomplete unless she can cause him some amount of pain ; that he should be angry and hurt and sore seems to her a stronger proof of his love than all his devotion and kindness ; she acts her little part, and lays her little traps, and the man falls into them for the most part over and over again, with a blindness and an unsuspectingness that are absolutely astonishing.

As Juliet went up-stairs, she said to herself ; 'So ! he is jealous !—very well, I can easily work that a little more !—and surely, if he is jealous already, he *must* care a little for me still !'

'Whom on earth were you talking to, Mrs. Travers ?'

'An old friend, Lord George,' she answered, somewhat shortly, 'who has just come home from India, and whom I was trying to persuade to come in to lunch. Did you find it very hot out, Rosa ?'

'Suffocating !—and such a crowd ! But who is your "old friend," Juliet ?'

'Colonel Fleming—he was my guardian,' she added coldly, taking off her bonnet.

'A guardian !' cried Mrs. Dalmaine ; 'how alarming, and how dull ! and I who detest the whole race of parents and guardians, grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts, unless they die and leave me their money : then I can bless their memories with tears in my eyes and wear decent mourning for them—decidedly. I am very glad your old gentleman did not accept your invitation to lunch, Juliet ! What a providential escape we had !'

'I don't think you would have called this guardian an "old gentleman" if you had peeped at him from behind the blinds as I did,' said Lord George, who was taking Juliet's gloves and parasol from her hand ; 'he seemed to me a very good-looking fellow—more of the cousin genus—eh, Mrs. Travers ?'

'What rubbish you are both talking !' cried Juliet, impatiently—the idle chatter jarring strangely upon her. 'Do let us come down to luncheon—I am starving ; and do find something more amusing to talk about ! Whom did you see this morning ?'