

"He leaves Redwood in trust for Caroline and her children, in the evident belief that we shall marry, according to his known wish and intention." He paused. Miss Kendall said nothing. "Our union was very near his heart, as you know," he added, hesitating in an experimental sort of inquisition, perfectly apparent to the sharp shrewdness of his companion. There was another pause.

"So Redwood is Caroline's, then," said Miss Kendal, with a ruminative air; "and she is not left penniless, after all?"

"Penniless! You cannot suppose that, even had the original wilted, I should have suffered my friend—my dear companion—my once betrothed—to lack the means to which she has been accustomed all her life. Do me at least justice."

"I try, Vaughan Hesketh," she replied, drily.

"I have been most unhappy—most wretched—in the entire affair. Would to heaven I had never beheld the friend—the syren—you yourself brought to our quiet, happy Redwood!" he cried, energetically.

"Be careful of your dates, in justice to me. Remember Mrs. Bingley's party, and various other occasions, during your stay in London."

"I am in danger of forgetting everything!" he returned with a passionate tossing back of the hair from his forehead; "you do not know the complications that overwhelm me—of remorse, despair, misery, most complete and hopeless."

"I can guess, said Miss Kendal, grimly. "Doubtless your position is uncomfortable enough. But you have earned it. You schemed, and your schemes have failed. You are foiled—not wronged."

"You are ungenerous," he called out, writhing under her cold, steel-like sentences; "you have no right to taunt me with my own bitter misfortune."

"I would be the last to taunt you; may, had you only been true to yourself in but a single feeling, your reality in that should have my sympathy; your wretchedness would command my compassion. But I believe I appraised you too sanguinely, after all. Even what you called your love for Blanche de Vigny was but a gust of passion. It has blown by, even now."

He said nothing. He could afford neither to acquiesce nor to contradict.

"But to the point," resumed Miss Kendal; "your present business with me—what is it?"

"I came to tell you, as I have said; I thought it best that you and Caroline should learn the intelligence through me, before the lawyers make their formal announcement. Besides——"

*(To be continued.)*