

There was a silence that could be heard. In the midst of it Faversham rose. He was agitated and a little incoherent.

"The rest of what has to be said is not a formal matter. If Miss Melrose, or her guardians, choose to make me the first Curator of the Threlfall Tower Museum, I am willing to accept that office at their hands, and —after, perhaps, a year — I should like to occupy the rooms I have mentioned in the west wing — with the lady who has now promised to be my wife. I know perhaps better than any one else what the house contains; and I could spend, if not my life, at any rate a term of years, in making the Tower a palace of art, a centre of design, of training, of suggestion — a House Beautiful, indeed, for the whole north of England. And my promised wife says she will help me."

He looked at Lydia. She put her hand in his. The sight of most people in the room had grown dim.

But Felicia had jumped up.

"I don't want it all! I won't have it all!" she said in a passionate excitement. "My father hated me. I told him I would never take his money. Why didn't you tell me — why didn't you warn me?" She turned to Tatham, her little body shaking, and her face threatening tears.

"Why should Mr. Faversham do such a thing? Don't let him! — don't let him! And I ought — I ought — to have been told!"

Faversham and Lydia approached her. But suddenly, putting her hands to her face, she ran to the French window of the library, opened it, and rushed into the garden.

Tatham and his mother looked at each other aghast.