

all the invitations  
at any moment ;  
main."

proud old woman,  
g to show signs of  
of weary watching

o his assurance that  
cause if it had they  
alous ear.

nd had gone to the  
taken, men slain ;  
e would never see

os, but within her  
Deane to be still  
r son's wife.

herself, as she lay  
had married her he  
en him happy and  
married her !"

y old woman would  
s—would even wel-

no fool, and pen-  
pose weary months,  
had sent him to a

Even when Helen  
a, and softly mur-  
y uttered no pro-  
beauty mentioned  
asure trip on the  
e of sad presenti-  
of glances, would  
uneasiness ; and,  
ous and fearful.

quired if they had  
Lady Chesterton  
aughed.

y dear Reginald.  
the world. No  
We sha'n't hear,  
that time he will  
s, and be tearing  
of the Turks and  
about it."

And Reginald invariably gnawed his mustache and looked down at his boots, and took his departure in silence.

Not only to Reginald, but to all other inquirers, and they were many, the beauty gave the same answer ; and the world in which she moved, the little world of the upper ten, wondered and shrugged its shoulders.

"A rare, high-spirited one, the Montessor, said the duke to Graneland. "Looks very much as if Chesterton had become food for powder, and yet she doesn't show a sign ; no mourning bride about her !"

And for answer, the famous, or infamous, marquis showed his exquisitely made set of teeth in a significant smile, that seemed to say that he knew a thing or two which he would keep to himself.

"No ; the sort of woman I admire. Don't wear her heart upon her sleeve for daws like you to peck at, duke. As for the fellow, he doesn't know when he has a good thing. He'd come back and find he's lost it, if he doesn't take care."

No, the beauty was not one to wear her heart upon her sleeve. Not even her maid knew or guessed anything of the long, weary hours in which, when all was still in the great house, the famous beauty walked with noiseless feet up and down her bedroom, tortured by wild anxiety and ceaseless longing.

To-night, ignorant that he was almost within reach of her, she entered the drawing-room, dressed for the last ball of the season.

She was magnificently attired. Diamonds gleamed in her yellow hair, and rose and fell on her white bosom. So exquisite a picture did she make as she stood in the soft light of the shaded lamp, that Lady Chesterton, as she turned and looked at her, could not help but wonder that any man should leave so radiant and beautiful a creature for a wild life of hardship and peril.

"Where are you going to-night, Helen ?" she asked, listlessly, a touch of reproach in her voice.

Surely this girl could not love the absent man, or she would not thus array herself in his absence.

"To Lady Wrenbrow's," replied the beauty. "It is the last ball. What we shall do afterwards, I know not. Die of *ennui*, I suppose. Do you mind my going ? Say the word, and I will stay. I do not care for it."

The old lady shook her head.

"No ; go by all means. It is fortunate you can enjoy yourself as you do under the circumstances."

The beauty smiled strangely, and for the first time she allowed nature to show itself.

"Would you have me play the part of the deserted bride ?" she asked, and there was a tone of bitterness in her voice that caused Lady Chesterton to look up at her.