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bably the first man and woman heard the same sounds and none other in Eden. I don't see why all the millions after them have lived; they have only been a sceble imitation of the first two at best. No one since has had anything unadulterated. This is our Eden for the moment, dear Nell. These people up above are the scrpent, but more noisy, and probably less agreeable.

Suddenly one of the unseen spoke. 'Yes; on the whole Halstead's wedding is a warning to my sex Don't you think so?'

'I hear he is such a handsome man, too; but he couldn't have cared much about her, or he would have looked after her better. The Lamberts are nobodies, and probably she wasn't much like a lady,' a woman answered.

'He's going to get a divorce as fast as possible. Lucky for him to get

rid of her so soon.'

'Awfully clever, I should call it,' said a third and languid speaker. Then a silence fell above and below, and the two in the garden felt as if the

serpent had trailed very near indeed to them.

Merreday's face went whiter, and a shudder passed through him. He was suddenly wholly awake, as he had not been before, to the iniquity of that which he had begun in sheer impish mischief, though he was continu ing it now from a passion that every moment was getting a stronger mastery over him. A maddening helplessness was taking possession of him. What could he do? Remorse would do no good to him or her; a deed once done is done to all eternity, she had said to-day. There was no chance of going back and forever undoing, and no explanations could set things wholly right. He wished the strange fever of last year that seemed to be rushing through his veins again, till his head whirled and his eyes grew dim, would kill him as he trembled with hatred of himself. 'Halstead's wedding is a warning to his sex.' he repeated to himself, and his bitterness came back as he thought of Lal. 'Yes,' it is a warning to a man not to be a fool when he has married a woman worth loving. I believe he'd take either Heaven or Hell as if It were his natural inheritance.'

He looked across at her face-dear face with the dark hair dropping low over her forehead, and the soft eyes that he loved better than his life. pretty hands were trembling, but she kept her self control and looked up at

him as though he were the only help she had in the world. 'Our ship is going to stay here all day, before it goes to Leghorn,' she 'Could we go on board her again; it would give us time to

think.

She felt as if she could not bear to tread the earth, and only the sea would soothe her sufficiently to let her think over what she had heard.

'Yes, dear,' he said gently. The last word sank into her heart and was

very sweet.

The ship was deserted, and the purser agreed to let them dine and sleep on board, provided there were not many new passengers. As it happened there were none, so that virtually they had it to themselves. Nell stayed in her cabin till dinner time, then she crept out and sat on the captalu's right hand at the table which was laid on deck. Merreday bardly said a word. He looked ill, and he seemed to be lost in thought; but once or twice his eyes, when they met hers, were full of unutterable love and compassion.

She went to her old seat near the bows in the twilight, and when Merreday found her there she was sobbing softly to herself. He sat down, but somehow his movements had grown slow, and the look of physical pain

was on his face.

'Are you no better?' she asked, trying to hide her tears.
'No.' He stopped, and asked, in a low voice. 'Why is He stopped, and asked, in a low voice, 'Why is she crying ?'

'Oh!' she said; 'I know at last—I know that he never cared for me at all, and he wants to keep away from me. He is going to divorce me. If he had cared at all, as you said, he would have come to me before this, or pulled the sky down.'

She was silent, and, do what he could, he could not help feeling an ungovernable contempt for the man he had wronged. After all, unless a man is a fool he gets at the woman he loves, somehow,' he thought.

'Poor little soul,' he said, with a shiver, and took her hands, and held

them up to her face, but she hardly knew it in her excitoment.

'He can't love me at all,' she repeated.

'But I love you, Nell l' for he could keep it in no longer. 'My darling, my life, I idolise you,'

' You!' She looked up, dazed. 'Yes—I,' he repeated, sadly, with a world of tenderness in his voice; 'but don't let it slarm you, dear one. I did not mean to say it, or that you should know it. If it had only been different! Don't you remember that first night at the Ives'? I told her, when you had gone, that I loved you. I have love I you ever since.

'Oh, but I never thought of this !' she cried, and she shrank away from him, and would not let herself know that she was drinking in every word

'You shall never hear it again, my darling,' he went on desperately, though I love you, and all the sweetness in you better than my own soul. I have not said or done the least thing to vex or harm you, my pretty one, all these days we have been together, have I?'

'And I never will-but it has grown apace.' He said the last words under his breath, but she heard them and understood. She got up slowly and passed by him.

(To be Continued.)

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