

HALF A ROGUE

"Yes, Patty; it is as true as I love you. But let us not speak of that," sadly.

"Yes, yes! Let us speak of it!" a wild despair in her voice and gesture. "Let us speak of it, since I do nothing but think of it, think of it, think of it! Oh! I am utterly shameless, but I can not fight any longer. I have no longer any pride. I should despise you, but I do not. I should hate you, but I can not. . . No, no! Stay where you are."

"Patty, do you love me?" There was a note in his voice as vibrant as the second string of a 'cello.

"Yes."

"Do you still believe that I am a blackguard?"

"I care not what you are or what you have been; nothing, nothing. It is only what you have been to me and what you still are. Something is wrong; something is terribly wrong; I know not what it is. Surely God would not let me love you as I do if you were not worthy."

"No," he replied gravely; "God would not do that."

The tears rolled down Patty's cheeks, but there was no sound.

"Here, Patty; read this letter which I was about to send you."