

## THE ORPHANS;

OR,

## THE HEIR OF LONGWORTH.

He would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of "the devil and all his works," had not his path been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghost, goblin, or the whole race of witches, and that was—a woman.—*Washington Irving.*

## CHAPTER XI.

AFTER.

It is the middle of the afternoon. Miss Harriott, in garden gloves and hat, is busy among her rose bushes and verbenas and heliotrope, and pruning, weeding, tying up. It is the day after the party, soft, pale, sunless day, the gray sea melting into the fleecy, gold-gray sky, and a pale dim haze veiling the land. Miss Harriott hums a tune to herself as she works, when the click of the little garden gate reaches her, and looking up she sees Miss Landelle the younger. Miss Harriott drops basket and garden shears, and approaches to greet her guest.

"My dear mademoiselle——"

"My name is Reine," interrupts the young lady, with that brilliant smile of hers.

"And Reine is queen. Well, you looked like a Little Queen last night. You do always. I shall call you that."

"Go on with your work, madame," says Reine, dropping into a rustic chair, "and please don't flatter. Compliments and daylight never go well together. What a pretty garden—what a pretty little house this is."

"A doll's house, my dear, but big enough for one old maid and her waiting woman. I am glad you have found me out, Little Queen. I was thinking of you as you came up."

"Thinking what?"

Miss Harriott smiles as she draws on her gloves, and resumes basket and scissors.

"I am afraid it would hardly do to tell you just yet. It might be premature," she answers, snipping away industriously, "but something pleasant all the same."

She has been thinking of her friend, Mr. Longworth, and Mrs. Windsor's second granddaughter, after the fashion of match-making women; but some-

thing in the pale, serious look of the young lady's face makes her realize that the association of ideas might not be agreeable.

Miss Harriott's snipping and clipping goes on, mademoiselle sits and looks at her, her hat in her lap, with tired, sombre eyes.

"Little Queen," Miss Harriott says, suddenly pausing in her work, "how pale you are, how weary you look. What is it?"

"Am I pale? But that is nothing. I never have colour. And I suppose I am tired after last night. I am not used to dissipation and late hours."

"Three o'clock is not so very late."

"It is for me. I have been brought up like a nun. Except when Aunt Denise took me two or three times to England, to visit papa, I hardly ever spent an evening out. At home, my music and my other little studies, little birthday fetes, and trips away with my aunt, filled all the hours. So I suppose very mild dissipation like that of last night tells."

"How is your sister to-day? Does she bear it better?"

"Much better; but Marie is used to it. She knew many people, very great people too, in London," Reine says, with a touch of sisterly pride, "and went out a great deal. Marie makes friends go where she will."

"With that lovely face of hers, to make friends must indeed be easy."

"You think her lovely, madame?"

"Can there be any two opinions on that subject, my dear? I think it is the most beautiful face I ever saw out of a frame."

Mademoiselle smiles, and her dark eyes, not as brilliant as usual this afternoon, light. Praise of her sister is evidently the short cut to Reine Landelle's heart. No touch of envy for that superior loveliness, it is quite evident, mingles with the boundless admiration she feels for that elder sister.

"I think the angels must look like Marie," she says, quite simply, "with golden hair and yellow-brown eyes, as Old Italian artists paint the Madonna. Mees Harriott, how happy you ought to be all by yourself in this pretty little house."

"Ought I? Most people's idea of