

"Pray don't be cross, mamma," said the bride, quietly. "She could not help crying. The marks will soon pass away."

"They will not," cried her ladyship, angrily. "Sir Grantley Wilters is coming, and her nose is as red as a servant girl's, while your eyes are half swollen up. After all my pains—after all my anxiety—never was mother troubled with such thankless children."

"Poor old girl!" said Tom, taking a good sip of brandy-and-seltzer.

"Anthony!" cried her ladyship, "you must not touch her. You are crushing her veil and those flowers. Oh, this is madness."

Madness or not, before she could check the natural action, the earl had taken his elder daughter in his arms, and kissed her lovingly, patting and stroking her sweet face, as, regardless of wreath and veil, she flung her arms round his neck and nestled closely to him.

"Bless you, my darling. I hope you will like India," he said. "Rather warm, but they make delicious curries there. I hope you will be very very happy;" and the tears trickled down his furrowed countenance as he spoke.

"I'll try to be, papa dear," she whispered, making an effort to speak firmly.

"That's right, my dear. The trains are very comfortable to Brindisi, and Tom says that Goole isn't such a very bad fellow."

"Anthony, are you quite mad!" cried her ladyship, wringing her hands till her diamonds crackled. "Are you all engaged in a conspiracy against me?"