

or look so beautiful as you do to-night," returned the boy; "and there will be no one to see us, or to envy me my partner. Oh! do come back to the ball-room!"

"Then it is only the diamonds, Henry, and the envy of the crowd, you covet," said Rosamond, sadly. "I despise both."

"He is but a child," said his fond mother, regarding him with maternal pride, "and his human nature."

Mr. Bradshawe had now discovered Rosamond, and he, guessing the cause of her illness, urged her to return. "Your aunt is waiting for you in the ante-room. Your friends must excuse you to-night." Rosamond gladly accepted his arm, and, bidding Mrs. Ponsonby and her son good night, she hastened from a scene which had occasioned her so much mental anguish.

"And he did see me!" said Rosamond, as she once more regarded her altered countenance and rich attire in the large chamber glass. "And what has been the result? Coldness and contempt! Oh! that I could forget him—could hate him—for I now know beyond a doubt that such are his feelings towards me. Alas! that I should betray my weakness to him, for he must have suspected the cause. I will urge my grandmother to leave Branby tomorrow."

Rosamond was mistaken when she thought that Major Sternfield had beheld her with indifference. Though, taught by the world to conceal his feelings more effectually, his agitation was scarcely less than her own; and it was pride alone, that "first false passion of his breast," that hindered him from following her into the adjoining room, and imploring her forgiveness for the injuries he had heaped upon her.

His meeting with Rosamond was quite unexpected, and had been brought about in the following manner: Mrs. Ponsonby's husband was a general officer in India, under whom he had served; and when returning on leave of absence to put in his claims for the Westholm property, he had been commissioned by his superior with letters and packages for his family at home.

These had been forwarded on his first arrival, but his love affair with his cousin had hindered him from paying his respects to Mrs. Ponsonby in person; and after his final separation from Rose, he hastened to perform his promise to the General. He happened to arrive on the very evening of the ball, and had only just learned that it was given in honor of Miss Sternfield's visit to their mutual relative, when the injured girl appeared before him in all her simple loveliness; she looked so beautiful, and appeared so happy with her juvenile partner, that, while gazing with

wonder on her ingenuous face, his faith in her treachery was shaken, and he began to suspect that he alone was the traitor; but when she offered him her hand in the dance, and their eyes met, and she sank before him, like one smitten with a deadly blight, he could no longer doubt that she had regarded him with affection, that she loved him still—and he rushed forward to receive her as she fell, when his arm was put back by Edgar Hartland, who carried her from the room.

"Who is that gentleman?" he demanded of a bystander.

"Squire Hartland—the deaf and dumb gentleman. An old friend of Mrs. Dunstanville's."

Major Sternfield bit his lip. He could not but admire the noble form and bearing of his silent rival; but he hated him for his evident superiority, and, finding that neither Edgar nor Rosamond returned to the ball-room, he left the scene, overwhelmed with remorse, and more in love with Rosamond than he had ever been before.

If the victim of his jealous suspicions passed a restless night, her vigils were shared by the man, for whose sake she had endured so much. Restless and unhappy, he never sought his couch, but continued to pace his room, through the remainder of the night. Once he took paper from his desk, and attempted to pen a long letter to Rose. Then again pride urged him to rend the document which would have restored him to her favor, and to treat the whole affair with a lofty disdain, that scorned to make the least concession, although urged by conscience that he alone was to blame. First impressions are from heaven, and if acted upon, often lead to the most happy results; but after thoughts are mingled with the cold, selfish policy of man; and the opportunity which might have saved from ruin, is lost to the over cautious for ever. So it was with Major Sternfield; the power of regaining his position was offered to him, and the time wasted in contemplating a failure, could never be retrieved. The next morning, Rosamond and her grandmother were on the road to Westholm—and Major Sternfield returned to London.

CHAPTER XII.

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All this is mine—these broad and fair domains!
These sylvan woods—those grassy sloping hills;
Around whose base the joyous, tinkling rills,
In lengthy brightness, wind their silvery chains.

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WESTHOLM, an old castellated mansion, built during the wars of the White and Red Rose, stood in the midst of a deep valley, surrounded on all