

Something like a wave of great regret was in her voice and manner.

"Papa—and you promised. Since mother died you have refused me nothing, and you promised never again to turn up a card, only three weeks ago, before I went to Shropshire. It is so little I asked you, and yet you have broken your word already."

He faced his daughter's accusing eyes with a haunting thought of the sweet woman whose passing was such a bitter wrench—whose memory ever held a place in his mind. The girl before him was her mother over again, vividly reminding him of the distant past. She had the same beautiful oval face; the same clean-cut features; the same still, but watchful, kindly flame in her slumbering grey eyes, behind which lurked depths of passion unplumbed; the same proud poise of the exquisite head set gracefully on pretty shoulders; and the same deep sincerity in her round voice. Standing there at the open window in the mellow sunlight, her coiled hair, so deeply brown that in some lights it looked almost black, shone with a subtle glistening charm, a glorious setting for the eager young face strong with the pride of her race. She was dressed in lavender silk, with many flounces, and some rare point lace at her white round throat, which he had seen worn by another woman, heightened the persistent appeal she made to his memory.

"I am deeply sorry, Rosa," he said; "but there is some kink in all the Derings. A pack of cards sets our brains dancing. I am fearfully embarrassed, and at Crockford's the cards tempted me. At first I had luck in a small way, and the fever of play

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