

"I am well now, my dear friend," he said to Bolingbroke; "'twas only a passing faintness. The fumes of the log fire stupefied me."

"And here you will catch a consumption, if you sit in this cold air," returned his friend, while Judith hung over him with a white scared face, full of keenest anxiety.

"It is not cold, but if you are afraid of your gout—"

"I am, my dear Lavendale, so I will leave Lady Judith to take care of you for a few minutes—I urgently advise you to stay no longer than that. Are you sure you are quite recovered?"

"Quite recovered. Infinitely happy," murmured Lavendale, in a dreamy voice, with his hand in Judith's, looking up at her as she stood by his side.

Bolingbroke left them discreetly. To the old intriguer it seemed the most natural thing in the world to leave those two alone together.

"How fond they are of each other!" he said to himself; "'tis a pity poor Lavendale is so marked for death. And yet perhaps he may live long enough for them to get tired of each other;