

you didn't think we might hurry it up, you know, so that you could come with me?"

"No, dear, no; we'll wait," and she kissed him softly on the forehead.

So the wedding was postponed, and the reason why was talked about with much interest for a day or two.

One evening about a month later, Margaret and her mother sat in the stalls of the Savoy Theatre to see Duse's inimitable performance of "Magda."

"Margaret," said Mrs. Falkiner, when the curtain had descended for the first entr'acte, "there is a man two rows in front of us who puzzles me. He has seen us too, I know, when he thought we were not looking. I believe he is Warren Blair; you remember him?"

"Yes, mother," said Margaret quietly, but turning a shade paler as she spoke.

"He has altered very much surely, or my sight is getting bad?"

"Yes, mother, he looks much older but — he is coming to speak to us."

As there was a vacant stall next Margaret, Blair took it.

"Have you been out of England, Mr. Blair?" Mrs. Falkiner asked. "We have not seen you for so long."

"Yes, I was called suddenly away a little over six months ago. My affairs in Wall St. went wrong, and the result is," with an indifferent smile, "that I am practically a poor man." The fortune of war! he went on, with a laugh, but Margaret's little hand had for a second involuntarily found his.

At the end of the play when he had put them into their brougham, Mrs. Falkiner said, "Now that your affairs do not keep you away, I hope you will not forget us?"

"Almost any day about half-past five," Margaret added softly, and it seemed to him pleadingly. And her voice sounded in his ears until he saw her again.

It was not long. The next day he came and she was alone.

She met him shyly, she didn't seem to be able to help it, try as she would to be different.

"Margaret," he cried impulsively, "Margaret, is it possible that after all these months you've changed towards me, you — Margaret, I worship you!" and he was beside her where she sat, and she was in his arms.

Then she thought, then she remembered, and suddenly freeing herself she rose with a terrible feeling of remorse.

"Oh! don't you know?"

"Know!"

"Yes, I'm engaged to Alec Deane—the wedding was to have been over by now—it's only been postponed—and we are to be married when he comes back from Australia."

She spoke rapidly as if it were a lesson learnt which she feared to forget before she reached the end.

His face was ashen pale.

"Woman," he said between his teeth, "then why, why have you let me come to you again?"

He moved towards the door.

"God only knows why," she answered from where she stood, very still, with her hands clasped tightly over her heart. "God only knows, but He does know, for He has put this great love for you into my heart. No, don't come to me—I never really understood it until I met you last night, when you said you were a poor man. I was always afraid it was your money, and not you; but, now that Alec is rich and you are poor, I understand better. And although I have promised to marry him, he has not one atom of my heart. It is all wrong—I could never marry him now; but I will ask him to release me when he comes back, and although it will hurt him very much, still not so much as if I married him. I owe this to you, to him—and to myself. Then I will be your wife. . . . No! no! here are my hands—kiss them. Our hearts are together, our souls are together. We can wait."

Mary Keegan.