

CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

A girl, young and pretty, but, above all, gifted with an air of adorable candor, lately presented herself before a certain Parisian lawyer, and thus addressed him.

"Monsieur, I come to consult you upon a grave affair. I want to oblige a man I love to marry me in spite of himself. How shall I proceed?"

The gentleman of the Bar had, of course, a sufficiently elastic conscience to reflect a moment; then, being sure that no third person overheard him, replied unhesitatingly—

"Mademoiselle, according to our law you already possess the means of forcing a man to marry you.

"You must remain on three occasions alone with him, then you can swear before a judge that he is your lover."

"And will that suffice, monsieur?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, with one further condition."

"Well?"

"That you will produce witnesses who will take oath to their having seen you remain a good quarter of an hour with the individual said to have trifled with your affections."

"Very well, monsieur: I will retain you as a counsel in the management of this affair. Good-day."

A few days afterwards the young girl returns. She is mysteriously received by the lawyer, who, scarcely giving her time to seat herself, questions her with the most lively curiosity.

"Well, mademoiselle, how do matters prosper?"

"Oh! all goes on swimmingly. I have passed a half-hour with my intended. I have been seen to go to his office and come down again. I have four witnesses, who will affirm this under oath."

"Capital—capital! Persevere in your design, mademoiselle. But mind, the next time you consult me you must tell me the name of the young man we are going to render happy in spite of himself."

"You shall have it without fail."

A fortnight afterwards the young person, more naive and candid than ever, knocked discreetly at the door of her counsel's room. No sooner was she within than she flung herself hastily in a chair, saying that she had mounted the stairs too rapidly, and that emotion made her breathless. Her counsel endeavoured to reassure her, and made her inhale salts, and even proposed to fetch a doctor.

"It is useless, monsieur," said she. "I am much better."

"Well, now do tell the name of the fortunate mortal you are going to espouse?"

"Are you very impatient to know it?"

"Exceedingly so."

"Well, then, the fortunate mortal, be it known to you, is—yourself," said the young beauty, bursting into a laugh. "I love you; I have been three times *te-te* with you, and my four witnesses are below, ready and willing to accompany us to the magistrate," gravely continued the narrator.

The lawyer, thus fairly caught, had the good sense not to get angry. The most singular fact of all is, that he adores his young wife, who, by the way, makes an excellent housekeeper.

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