
THE STORY OF A GENTLEMAN

"In which case he says 'Yes,'" cried St. Hilaire. "He gives his unqualified consent, for the match is in every way suitable. Dear Eleanor, will you not set an early day?"

"Oh, Monsieur de St. Hilaire, not so fast. You are jesting. Surely you are not speaking seriously?"

"I am deeply in earnest, Mademoiselle Madison."

"Then I must say at once that I appreciate the honor, and I thank you for it, but I cannot marry you."

"Do not say that, mademoiselle. Why, an instant ago you led me to believe——"

"A moment ago I thought you were jesting," she replied quickly. "I have a merry heart and entered into the affair in the same spirit; but now that it is serious——"

"Wait a moment before you speak," implored St. Hilaire. "Stop and reconsider before you say definitely 'No!' Give me a little more time to plead my cause."

"But how *can* I reconsider when my heart already belongs to another?"