

me, without Major Ellis' knowledge too; indeed—indeed you must not; and now please let me go. What would Mrs. Ellis think of me?"

"If my brother supports me, then, Edith, may I speak to you?"

"I cannot tell; oh, please let me go now." The girl spoke impatiently in her longing to escape from a position which seemed to her a false and dangerous one. Her tone was that of one eager to escape, and poor Cyril's mind was for the moment filled with mortification—a shade of jealousy of Edward crossed his mind—was Edward more favoured than he—he had heard of such things as girls liking boys who were their juniors. "Pardon me, Miss Sorrel; excuse me if I have been hasty." He spoke coldly, and, bowing, was about to leave the room when he was met by Mrs. Ellis, who was evidently in great agitation.

"Oh, Cyril, such a dreadful thing has happened. The bracelet has been stolen."

"How do you know it has been stolen—are you sure of it?"

"Cadgett went out to the village this morning. She left the bracelet in its case on the bureau in her dressing-room, and when she came back it had disappeared, the bracelet and the cross that was with it."

"Did she go out before the boys left for school?"

"Half an hour. It must have been taken by some inmate of the house. Now all the servants were employed with me in the kitchen all the forenoon. So it actually lies among the boys—very unpleasant, is it not?"

"And me, Mrs. Ellis, I am quite as much under the suspicion as the boys, you must remember," said Edith. "You, indeed, my dear," said Mrs. Ellis "you don't need jewellery just yet with that complexion of your's. No, we won't accuse you of stealing diamonds." And Mrs. Ellis laughed loudly. She was checked by the approach of her husband, who fixed on her a stern glance effectually rebuking her levity.

"This is apparently a mysterious business," said Cyril.

"It is a mystery no more, Cyril. The thief has been discovered," said Major Ellis in a tone of unusual sternness and hardness. "His name I am ashamed to say, is Edward Ellis. My first step was to search the house—that we did for better security, all together—no result was gained. I then questioned each boy separately, and I was struck with something that seemed like evasion in Edward's replies. As the investigation proceeded, I found that little Figgs evidently knew something of the matter. He is a thorough coward; and I found that Edward Ellis (the Major seemed to give the full name as if purposely dwelling on the thought of the shame brought upon it) had bribed him to replace the cross in Mrs. Cadgett's rooms. The cross I took myself from young Figgs. And my son did not deny the truth of what Figgs said. Of course he saw it was useless."

(To be continued.)

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