

Then half to himself he said, "perhaps she left something in her will to pay off those expenses."

"I do not think Mamma would have wished to have a very costly funeral. She has often said that she should prefer to be buried quietly."

"Pooh, pooh! Leave that to me. Where is your mother's will, Maud?"

"Mr. Coleman told me that he had taken it away with him."

"Coleman! when was he here? Did he make any alterations in the will?" enquired Mr. Brereton eagerly.

"I do not know. Mr. Coleman was here yesterday, but Mamma saw him alone."

"Why did you not tell me that last night? By Heaven, I would have known what alterations she made! She should have left her money —."

"I did not say that any changes had been made. I only said Mr. Coleman had been here," interrupted Maud.

"Right, my dear, quite right. Perhaps no changes were made, and, at any rate, what is the good of bothering myself?" replied Mr. Brereton, resuming his ordinary self-contained manner, and signing to Maud to refill his empty glass. This done he again leaned back in his chair, and sighed. "About the funeral, you may rest quite contented. Everything shall be done as handsomely as possible, and of course we must invite all the neighbourhood."

Maud made no reply. She was wondering what first had made "the little rift within the lute" of her father's love for her mother; for that once he had loved her tenderly she well knew.

"Be sure you write yourself to Lord Ashburton. He'll feel it. He was a favourite—he was!" and Mr. Brereton's voice took a sound of irony.

Maud still was silent. "I must send for Wellby (the undertaker) to-morrow morning; it is too late to-night, and we will make all the arrangements for a fashionable funeral. And you, Maud, take care that your part is well done. Have a good luncheon for the guests, and a dinner for the servants, and let Wellby's people be thoroughly well looked after. Now we will make a list of all who are to be invited, and of course every one must be asked to send a carriage. (Mr. Brereton's world excluded, as wholly without the pale of society, every one who did not possess at least one carriage.) "It shall never be said that James Brereton did not know how to treat his wife's memory with proper respect."

Maud could scarcely refrain from bursting into a torrent of indignation at her father's cold-hearted interest in—she almost called it his enjoyment