

such perfect happiness irradiated her countenance that it rendered her plain features almost handsome. Eva's plan had succeeded admirably though as far as the actual breaking of the engagement went, her expectations had been disappointed. Notwithstanding his long stolen glances at Miss Stanton, his jealous inquisitive looks when Mr. Arlingford remained any time conversing behind her chair, Sir George had remained doggedly silent. The instant, however, Eva "requested him to free her from their mutual engagement, gently declaring her own reluctance to fulfil it," he unhesitatingly, in fact, cheerfully assented and that very night laid his fortune, whither his heart had wandered back long since, at Miss Stanton's feet. The contrast between Eva's coldness, her frigid taciturnity and Miss Stanton's smiling, though quiet politeness and ill-disguised partiality for himself, had soon wrought a wonderful change in the young baronet's sentiments and he was now, in every respect, equally well pleased and satisfied with his second choice.

Poor Helen Stanton herself could scarcely credit her good fortune. She who had attained the age of twenty-six without ever receiving one eligible offer, who had a host of unmarried younger sisters at home, that home, rendered so sad by the continual struggle between poverty and appearances, she to be Lady Leland with wealth and splendor, to have a grand mansion to place at the disposal of her poor sisters and marry them off, perhaps as well as herself, it was almost too much happiness and the feeling of partiality she had always entertained for the plain, straight-forward Sir George, now deepened into sincere and warm affection. The most perfect and unrestrained friendship reigned between the whole party none were more frank and friendly than Mr. Arlingford and his former rival; whilst Miss Stanton, who could not divest herself of a feeling of intense gratitude to Eva for having by her preference of Mr. Arlingford, given the baronet to herself, seemed to love her only second to the bride-groom elect himself.

Suddenly young Huntingdon who had been glancing occasionally from the window, whilst conversing with his sister, murmured a hasty apology and withdrew. Sir George remarking his hasty retreat, shortly after approached the casement and as he looked forth, energetically exclaimed;

"Well, by Jupiter! there's a sight. Arlingford, just look out, will you?" On the terrace beneath them, in confidential friendly intercourse, stood Lord Huntingdon and his son. The latter seemed persuading his companion to consent to some

proposal, for his handsome expressive countenance wore its most entreating look. Finally his Lordship seemed to yield, though very reluctantly, and the two disappeared immediately beneath the portal.

"Why, Mrs. Huntingdon, when did all this come round?" asked Sir George, his large eyes still dilated to twice their usual size.

"Oh! some time since!" was the smiling reply, "Lord Huntingdon accidentally met the children with their nurse, one morning, and struck by their appearance, or more probably tracing some family resemblance, enquired who they were. On being informed, he seemed equally surprised, and delighted, and emptied the contents of his purse between them. Again, either by design or chance he encountered them in the same place, when the acquaintance was farther cemented. Two or three days after, whilst passing the house, he saw the children playing amongst the trees at the end of the avenue, and dismounted to caress them, unconscious of their father's close proximity, whilst answering their childish questions and endearments, his glance fell on Augustus, who was leaning against a tree near, and who instantly advanced towards him. His Lordship could not refuse the father, the hand that had just been twined in the curls of the son, and the reconciliation was as immediate as it was complete."

"Just as it should be," was Sir George's encouraging comment: "but pardon my curiosity, Mrs. Huntingdon, have you been introduced to your father-in-law yet?"

The young wife colored, and murmured a reply in the negative.

"Then, I think you soon will be, for I hear them coming up stairs. Yes, that is his Lordship's step."

The girl drew back with changing cheek and beating heart, for Huntingdon Hall and its inmates inspired her with as much terror now as in the first days of her wedded life, and a moment after, the door was thrown open, and father and son entered together. There was a certain degree of awkward shyness about the manner of the former, and as his companion gently forced him in, he hesitatingly exclaimed:

"Well, really, my dear boy, I had rather—I had better not. What would Lady Huntingdon say if she heard of all this?" But in another moment his grand-children had sprang into his arms, his friends were around him, and all previous reluctance and doubts were forgotten. After a few moments, little Edgar, who evidently engrossed three-fourths of the new comer's attention