

alone, she aroused herself from a brown study, and exclaimed, with warmth,—"Drat the squire."

IV.

More than twenty miles from the scene of the events recorded, the highway, on which the osculatory horseman had ridden, reached one of a series of soul-satisfying scenes. On one side, distant less than a quarter of a mile, a pleasant little bay lay smiling, guarded at one of the points which flanked its entrance by a crane. This sentinel was never absent during the hours of daylight, and, according to the Indians, there had never been a time when the bird or one of his ancestors had not been there. Above the road the land sloped upwards, terminating in what could scarcely be designated a mountain, but was certainly a mountain-tote hill. Its peak was bald, or merely covered with turf, but along its sides maple, beech, fir and other trees clustered closely, reflected on one side by a lake, and abruptly terminating on another on the margin of a pasturage. Below this and surrounded by other trees, chiefly ash, birch and elm, stood a stone dwelling, with long sloping roof, and, under the bedroom flat, a veranda with trellised front and sides, covered with climbing roses and vines. From the house an avenue led to the road through a well-trimmed lawn, with trees sufficient in number to afford shade without interrupting the view.

It would have been difficult to find a more refreshing place on that quiet midsummer afternoon, with the heat, although diminishing as evening approached, yet still intense, than the room fronting on the lawn. The colors of wall paper, curtains and carpet were so well harmonized

that the detection of details of tinting was difficult, especially in the subdued light. The massive, but not ungraceful, mahogany furniture, the cabinets filled with knick-knacks, the china jars and plaques and the oil paintings, with heavy gilt frames, suggested taste and comfort and ancestry. Then there was that fine commingling of odors from potpourri and from blooming roses which stood in clusters in vases or guarded, outside, in front of the open casement windows.

Mrs. Wentworth was alone in this cosy apartment and, as usual when her day's work was over, she was reading. A calm faced woman with an air of refinement that was nearly queenlike, but was so tempered by a gentleness, manifested in every varied expression of her intelligent and mobile face, and in every gesture, that no one would suspect her of harboring pride or even being quite aware of her many and varied personal attributes and legitimate claims. For some years she had been the loved and loving wife of the kissing rider and dratted squire and, although her affection did not render her blind to his faults, she had every confidence in his good intentions and in their ultimately accomplishing permanently good results. His rather free and easy life, when single, was not unremembered or wholly unmentioned by his associates, and, more than once rumors of occurrences to his discredit had reached her ears. They made, however, no lasting serious impression on her mind, nor was she disconcerted when, occasionally it became manifest that he was not always able to escape from the influence of former habits. But she was no Evadne, of the Heavenly Twins, and,

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