

and for my sake, for our tried friendship's sake, promise you will write a line to recall him."

The speaker's pallid cheek and lips, her unsteady voice, betrayed how sincere and earnest was this appeal.

"It grieves me deeply, Letty, to refuse you anything you desire so greatly, but it is impossible for me to comply."

"Be it so! What are my worldly hopes and prospects, my peace and happiness, to others? But you may yet change your mind, and generously resolve to do a little more in behalf of that friendship of whose existence you have yourself more than once assured me," with which words she abruptly left the room.

What Virginia Weston felt at that moment it would not have been easy to describe. One by one her friends seemed falling off from her, whilst her isolation and loneliness of heart grew deeper. It was unbearable, and she must make an effort to see or speak to her husband. Quickly she pulled the bell.

"Did Mr. Weston say whether he would be home to dinner?"

"No, ma'am. He came in a short while ago, hurried like, and asked if you were in. I told him yes, though Miss Maberly was out, and that Captain Dacre was in the drawing-room, so he went out again. Excuse me, ma'am, but I found master looking very ill."

"I am sorry to hear it. Remember I am out to all callers," and Virginia with apparent calmness ascended to her room, locked it, and then gave way to the tumultuous and painful emotions surging within her breast.

Seek her husband now, after his finding her *à l'été* with the one man whose company he had ever asked her to shun! Seek her husband, and for what? To tell him of that odious insult, the ignominy of which was reflected more deeply perhaps on him than on herself, and which he might seek to avenge according to the world's sinful, terri-

ble code of honour. Ah, no, she felt now that she must rather avoid him, lest he should read the hateful secret in her face.

How her cheeks burned as she recalled that galling interview! How she deplored the folly that had led to such a result! Heavily the day dragged on. Her head was throbbing with pain—her lips were parched and feverish.

A tap at the door, and her maid entered to announce that dinner was served.

"Is Mr. Weston in?"

"No, ma'am."

"Bring me up a cup of tea here, for I will not go down to-night; my head is aching."

After watching the leaden sky and rain-drowned landscape till darkness blotted them from sight, she threw herself on the bed, partly dressed. Hour after hour passed, but no moment of slumber visited her burning eyelids. Motionless she lay there, unconsciously listening and longing for her husband's return. She kept her vigil in vain. Two o'clock, three o'clock, struck, and still he had not come. Then a feeling of deep indignation suddenly awoke within her. Was it right of any husband thus to spend his nights from home—to treat a young wife with such open indifference and neglect? Whatever her faults might be this was not the way to induce her to amend them; nor, was it paying her the common courtesy due to her as bearer of his name and mistress of his household.

Away then with all half-formed plans of amendment, or self-upbraidings over the past! Since he would go his way, she would go hers; and if it were not a happy, it would at least be a gay and brilliant one. With such thoughts she at length fell asleep.

Dawn was breaking through rain and mist, when Weston, pale and haggard, entered the room. He paused a moment beside his sleeping wife, and sorrowfully looked down on that sweet, girlish face, so beautiful in its calm repose. Even though the remembrance of her indifference to himself—