

GABRIEL PRAED'S CASTLE

"Jove! Here's Virginie looking more delightfully medieval than ever. Which saint have you been posing for today, cherie?"

The girl stood facing him with a defiant air. Her thin figure was clad in dark green, and her pale face was framed in loose masses of red hair.

"None, as it happens," she answered without a smile. "The artists don't use me for saints, you see. I suppose they think Lucrezia Borgia and her kind suit me better. She, it seems, was a lady without prejudices."

Garvie listened in silence, while Frye spoke: "You malign yourself, my dear, though I am glad to find you so well up in your historical studies. Well, I leave Garvie to smooth your ruffled brow. *Au revoir.*"

As he went, the girl came forward to stand before the picture on the easel. "It is strong, that," she murmured. "It would be a thousand pities not to finish it."

Garvie sprang up dismayed.

"Not to finish it? I should rather think so. What do you mean by that?" he demanded.

"It will take many more sittings?" she asked, watching him closely from under heavy white lids.

"There is a good fortnight's work in it. But can't you say what you are up to?"

"You couldn't finish in a week?" she persisted.

"Certainly not. Why should I scamp my work for anyone's freaks?" Then trying persuasion,