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EVAN HARRINGTON

By George Meredith

BOOK 7.

XXXIX. IN THE DOMAIN OF TAILORDOM XL. IN WHICH THE COUNTESS STILL SCENTS GAME XLI. REVEALS AN ABOMINABLE PLOT OF THE BROTHERS COGGLESBY XLII. JULIANA XLIII. ROSE XLIV. CONTAINS A WARNING TO ALL CONSPIRATORS XLV. IN WHICH THE SHOP BECOMES THE CENTRE OF ATTRACTION XLVI. A LOVER'S PARTING XLVII. A YEAR LATER THE COUNTESS DE SALDAR DE SANCORVO TO HER SISTER CAROLINE

CHAPTER XXXIX

IN THE DOMAIN OF TAILORDOM

There was peace in Mr. Goren's shop. Badgered Ministers, bankrupt merchants, diplomatists with a headache—any of our modern grandees under difficulties, might have envied that peace over which Mr. Goren presided: and he was an enviable man. He loved his craft, he believed that he had not succeeded the millions of antecedent tailors in vain; and, excepting that trifling coquetry with shirt-fronts, viz., the red crosses, which a shrewd rival had very soon eclipsed by representing nymphs triangularly posed, he devoted himself to his business from morning to night; as rigid in demanding respect from those beneath him, as he was profuse in lavishing it on his patrons. His public boast was, that he owed no man a farthing; his secret comfort, that he possessed two thousand pounds in the Funds. But Mr. Goren did not stop here. Behind these external characteristics he nursed a passion. Evan was astonished and pleased to find in him an enthusiastic fern-collector. Not that Mr. Harrington shared the passion, but the sight of these brown roots spread out, ticketed, on the stained paper, after supper, when the shutters were up and the house defended from the hostile outer world; the old man poring over them, and naming this and that spot where, during his solitary Saturday afternoon and Sunday excursions, he had lighted on the rare samples exhibited this contrast of the quiet evening with the sordid day humanized Mr. Goren to him. He began to see a spirit in the rigid tradesman not so utterly dissimilar to his own, and he fancied that he, too, had a taste for ferns. Round Beckley how they abounded!

He told Mr. Goren so, and Mr. Goren said:

'Some day we'll jog down there together, as the saying goes.'

Mr. Goren spoke of it as an ordinary event, likely to happen in the days to come: not as an incident

the mere mention of which, as being probable, stopped the breath and made the pulses leap.

For now Evan's education taught him to feel that he was at his lowest degree. Never now could Rose stoop to him. He carried the shop on his back. She saw the brand of it on his forehead. Well! and what was Rose to him, beyond a blissful memory, a star that he had once touched? Self-love kept him strong by day, but in the darkness of night came his misery; waking from tender dreams, he would find his heart sinking under a horrible pressure, and then the fair fresh face of Rose swam over him; the hours of Beckley were revived; with intolerable anguish he saw that she was blameless—that he alone was to blame. Yet worse was it when his closed eyelids refused to conjure up the sorrowful lovely nightmare, and he lay like one in a trance, entombed-wretched Pagan! feeling all that had been blindly; when the Past lay beside him like a corpse that he had slain.

These nightly torments helped him to brave what the morning brought. Insensibly also, as Time hardened his sufferings, Evan asked himself what the shame of his position consisted in. He grew stiff-necked. His Pagan virtues stood up one by one to support him. Andrew, courageously evading the interdict that forbade him to visit Evan, would meet him by appointment at City taverns, and flatly offered him a place in the Brewery. Evan declined it, on the pretext that, having received Old Tom's money for the year, he must at least work out that term according to the conditions. Andrew fumed and sneered at Tailordom. Evan said that there was peace in Mr. Goren's shop. His sharp senses discerned in Andrew's sneer a certain sincerity, and he revolted against it. Mr John Raikes, too, burlesqued Society so well, that he had the satisfaction of laughing at his enemy occasionally. The latter gentleman was still a pensioner, flying about town with the Countess de Saldar, in deadly fear lest that fascinating lady should discover the seat of his fortune; happy, notwithstanding. In the mirror of Evan's little world, he beheld the great one from which he was banished.

Now the dusk of a winter's afternoon was closing over London, when a carriage drew up in front of Mr. Goren's shop, out of which, to Mr. Goren's chagrin, a lady stepped, with her veil down. The lady entered, and said that she wished to speak to Mr. Harrington. Mr. Goren made way for her to his pupil; and was amazed to see her fall into his arms, and hardly gratified to hear her say: 'Pardon me, darling, for coming to you in this place.'

Evan asked permission to occupy the parlour.

'My place,' said Mr. Goren, with humble severity, over his spectacles, 'is very poor. Such as it is, it is at the lady's service.'

Alone with her, Evan was about to ease his own feelings by remarking to the effect that Mr. Goren was human like the rest of us, but Caroline cried, with unwonted vivacity:

'Yes, yes, I know; but I thought only of you. I have such news for you! You will and must pardon my coming—that's my first thought, sensitive darling that you are!' She kissed him fondly. 'Juliana Bonner is in town, staying with us!'

'Is that your news?' asked Evan, pressing her against his breast.

'No, dear love—but still! You have no idea what her fortune— Mrs. Bonner has died and left her—but I mustn't tell you. Oh, my darling! how she admires you! She—she could recompense you; if you would! We will put that by, for the present. Dear! the Duke has begged you, through me, to accept—I think it 's to be a sort of bailiff to his estates—I don't know rightly. It's a very honourable post, that gentlemen take: and the income you are to have, Evan, will be near a thousand a year. Now, what do I deserve for my news?'

She put up her mouth for another kiss, out of breath.

'True?' looked Evan's eyes.

'True!' she said, smiling, and feasting on his bewilderment.

After the bubbling in his brain had a little subsided, Evan breathed as a man on whom fresh air is blown. Were not these tidings of release? His ridiculous pride must nevertheless inquire whether Caroline had been begging this for him.

'No, dear—indeed!' Caroline asserted with more than natural vehemence. 'It's something that you yourself have done that has pleased him. I don't know what. Only he says, he believes you are a man to be trusted with the keys of anything—and so you are. You are to call on him to-morrow. Will you?'

While Evan was replying, her face became white. She had heard the Major's voice in the shop. His military step advanced, and Caroline, exclaiming, 'Don't let me see him!' hustled to a door. Evan

nodded, and she slipped through. The next moment he was facing the stiff marine.

'Well, young man,' the Major commenced, and, seating himself, added, 'be seated. I want to talk to you seriously, sir. You didn't think fit to wait till I had done with the Directors today. You're devilishly out in your discipline, whatever you are at two and two. I suppose there's no fear of being intruded on here? None of your acquaintances likely to be introducing themselves to me?'

'There is not one that I would introduce to you,' said Evan.

The Major nodded a brief recognition of the compliment, and then, throwing his back against the chair, fired out: 'Come, sir, is this your doing?'

In military phrase, Evan now changed front. His first thought had been that the Major had come for his wife. He perceived that he himself was the special object of his visitation.

'I must ask you what you allude to,' he answered.

'You are not at your office, but you will speak to me as if there was some distinction between us,' said the Major. 'My having married your sister does not reduce me to the ranks, I hope.'

The Major drummed his knuckles on the table, after this impressive delivery.

'Hem!' he resumed. 'Now, sir, understand, before you speak a word, that I can see through any number of infernal lies. I see that you're prepared for prevarication. By George! it shall come out of you, if I get it by main force. The Duke compelled me to give you that appointment in my Company. Now, sir, did you, or did you not, go to him and deliberately state to him that you believed the affairs of the Company to be in a bad condition—infamously handled, likely to involve his honour as a gentleman? I ask you, sir, did you do this, or did you not do it?'

Evan waited till the sharp rattle of the Major's close had quieted.

'If I am to answer the wording of your statement, I may say that I did not.'

'Very good; very good; that will do. Are you aware that the Duke has sent in his resignation as a Director of our Company?'

'I hear of it first from you.'

'Confound your familiarity!' cried the irritable officer, rising. 'Am I always to be told that I married your sister? Address me, sir, as becomes your duty.'

Evan heard the words 'beggarly tailor' mumbled 'out of the gutters,' and 'cursed connection.' He stood in the attitude of attention, while the Major continued:

'Now, young man, listen to these facts. You came to me this day last week, and complained that you did not comprehend some of our transactions and affairs. I explained them to your damned stupidity. You went away. Three days after that, you had an interview with the Duke. Stop, sir! What the devil do you mean by daring to speak while I am speaking? You saw the Duke, I say. Now, what took place at that interview?'

The Major tried to tower over Evan powerfully, as he put this query. They were of a common height, and to do so, he had to rise on his toes, so that the effect was but momentary.

'I think I am not bound to reply,' said Evan.

'Very well, sir; that will do.' The Major's fingers were evidently itching for an absent rattan. 'Confess it or not, you are dismissed from your post. Do you hear? You are kicked in the street. A beggarly tailor you were born, and a beggarly tailor you will die.'

'I must beg you to stop, now,' said Evan. 'I told you that I was not bound to reply: but I will. If you will sit down, Major Strike, you shall hear what you wish to know.'

This being presently complied with, though not before a glare of the Major's eyes had shown his doubt whether it might not be construed into insolence, Evan pursued:

'I came to you and informed you that I could not reconcile the cash-accounts of the Company, and that certain of the later proceedings appeared to me to jeopardize its prosperity. Your explanations did not satisfy me. I admit that you enjoined me to be silent. But the Duke, as a Director, had as strong a right to claim me as his servant, and when he questioned me as to the position of the Company, I told him what I thought, just as I had told you.'

'You told him we were jobbers and swindlers, sir!'

'The Duke inquired of me whether I would, under the circumstances, while proceedings were going on which I did not approve of, take the responsibility of allowing my name to remain—'

'Ha! ha! ha!' the Major burst out. This was too good a joke. The name of a miserable young tailor!' Go on, sir, go on!' He swallowed his laughter like oil on his rage.

'I have said sufficient.'

Jumping up, the Major swore by the Lord, that he had said sufficient.

'Now, look you here, young man.' He squared his finger before Evan, eyeing him under a hard frown, 'You have been playing your game again, as you did down at that place in Hampshire. I heard of it—deserved to be shot, by heaven! You think you have got hold of the Duke, and you throw me over. You imagine, I dare say, that I will allow my wife to be talked about to further your interests—you self-seeking young dog! As long as he lent the Company his name, I permitted a great many things. Do you think me a blind idiot, sir? But now she must learn to be satisfied with people who 've got no titles, or carriages, and who can't give hundred guinea compliments. You're all of a piece—a set of . . .'

The Major paused, for half a word was on his mouth which had drawn lightning to Evan's eyes.

Not to be baffled, he added: 'But look you, sir. I may be ruined.

I dare say the Company will go to the dogs—every ass will follow a Duke.

But, mark, this goes on no more. I will be no woman's tally. Mind, sir,

I take excellent care that you don't traffic in your sister!'

The Major delivered this culminating remark with a well-timed deflection of his forefinger, and slightly turned aside when he had done.

You might have seen Evan's figure rocking, as he stood with his eyes steadily levelled on his sister's husband.

The Major, who, whatever he was, was physically no coward, did not fail to interpret the look, and challenge it.

Evan walked to the door, opened it, and said, between his teeth, 'You must go at once.'

'Eh, sir, eh? what's this?' exclaimed the warrior but the door was open, Mr. Goren was in the shop; the scandal of an assault in such a house, and the consequent possibility of his matrimonial alliance becoming bruited in the newspapers, held his arm after it had given an involuntary jerk. He marched through with becoming dignity, and marched out into the street; and if necks unelastic and heads erect may be taken as the sign of a proud soul and of nobility of mind, my artist has the Major for his model.

Evan displayed no such a presence. He returned to the little parlour, shut and locked the door to the shop, and forgetting that one was near, sat down, covered his eyes, and gave way to a fit of tearless sobbing. With one foot in the room Caroline hung watching him. A pain that she had never known wrung her nerves. His whole manhood seemed to be shaken, as if by regular pulsations of intensest misery. She stood in awe of the sight till her limbs failed her, and then staggering to him she fell on her knees, clasping his, passionately kissing them.

CHAPTER XL.

IN WHICH THE COUNTESS STILL SCENTS GAME

Mr. Raikes and his friend Frank Remand, surnamed Franko, to suit the requirements of metre, in which they habitually conversed, were walking arm-in-arm along the drive in Society's Park on a fine frosty Sunday afternoon of midwinter. The quips and jokes of Franko were lively, and he looked into the carriages passing, as if he knew that a cheerful countenance is not without charms for their inmates. Raikes' face, on the contrary, was barren and bleak. Being of that nature that when a pun was made he must perforce outstrip it, he fell into Franko's humour from time to time, but albeit aware that what he uttered was good, and by comparison transcendent, he refused to enjoy it. Nor when Franko started from his arm to declaim a passage, did he do other than make limp efforts to unite himself to Franko

again. A further sign of immense depression in him was that instead of the creative, it was the critical faculty he exercised, and rather than reply to Franko in his form of speech, he scanned occasional lines and objected to particular phrases. He had clearly exchanged the sanguine for the bilious temperament, and was fast stranding on the rocky shores of prose. Franko bore this very well, for he, like Raikes in happier days, claimed all the glances of lovely woman as his own, and on his right there flowed a stream of Beauties. At last he was compelled to observe: 'This change is sudden: wherefore so downcast? With tigrine claw thou mangiest my speech, thy cheeks are like December's pippin, and thy tongue most sour!'

'Then of it make a farce!' said Raikes, for the making of farces was Franko's profession. 'Wherefore so downcast! What a line! There! let's walk on. Let us the left foot forward stout advance. I care not for the herd.'

'Tis love!' cried Franko.

'Ay, an' it be!' Jack gloomily returned.

'For ever cruel is the sweet Saldar?'

Raikes winced at this name.

'A truce to banter, Franko!' he said sternly: but the subject was opened, and the wound.

'Love!' he pursued, mildly groaning. 'Suppose you adored a fascinating woman, and she knew—positively knew—your manly weakness, and you saw her smiling upon everybody, and she told you to be happy, and egad, when you came to reflect, you found that after three months' suit you were nothing better than her errand-boy? A thing to boast of, is it not, quotha?'

'Love's yellow-fever, jealousy, methinks,' Franko commenced in reply; but Raikes spat at the emphasized word.

'Jealousy!—who's jealous of clergymen and that crew? Not I, by Pluto! I carried five messages to one fellow with a coat-tail straight to his heels, last week. She thought I should drive my curricule—I couldn't afford an omnibus! I had to run. When I returned to her I was dirty. She made remarks!'

'Thy sufferings are severe—but such is woman!' said Franko. 'Gad, it's a good idea, though.' He took out a note-book and pencilled down a point or two. Raikes watched the process sardonically.

'My tragedy is, then, thy farce!' he exclaimed. 'Well, be it so! I believe I shall come to song-writing again myself shortly—beneath the shield of Catnach I'll a nation's ballads frame. I've spent my income in four months, and now I 'm living on my curricule. I underlet it. It 's like trade—it 's as bad as poor old Harrington, by Jove! But that isn't the worst, Franko!' Jack dropped his voice: 'I believe I'm furiously loved by a poor country wench.'

'Morals!' was Franko's most encouraging reproof.

'Oh, I don't think I've even kissed her,' rejoined Raikes, who doubted because his imagination was vivid. 'It 's my intellect that dazzles her. I 've got letters—she calls me clever. By Jove! since I gave up driving I've had thoughts of rushing down to her and making her mine in spite of home, family, fortune, friends, name, position—everything! I have, indeed.'

Franko looked naturally astonished at this amount of self-sacrifice. 'The Countess?' he shrewdly suggested.

'I'd rather be my Polly's prince,
Than yon great lady's errand-boy!'

Raikes burst into song.

He stretched out his hand, as if to discard all the great ladies who were passing. By the strangest misfortune ever known, the direction taken by his fingers was toward a carriage wherein, beautifully smiling opposite an elaborately reverend gentleman of middle age, the Countess de Saldar was sitting. This great lady is not to be blamed for deeming that her errand-boy was pointing her out vulgarly on a public promenade. Ineffable disdain curled off her sweet olive visage. She turned her head.

'I 'll go down to that girl to-night,' said Raikes, with compressed passion. And then he hurried Franko along to the bridge, where, behold, the Countess alighted with the gentleman, and walked beside him into the gardens.

'Follow her,' said Raikes, in agitation. 'Do you see her? by yon long-tailed raven's side? Follow her,

Franko! See if he kisses her hand- anything! and meet me here in half an hour. I'll have evidence!

Franko did not altogether like the office, but Raikes' dinners, singular luck, and superiority in the encounter of puns, gave him the upper hand with his friend, and so Franko went.

Turning away from the last glimpse of his Countess, Raikes crossed the bridge, and had not strolled far beneath the bare branches of one of the long green walks, when he perceived a gentleman with two ladies leaning on him.

'Now, there,' moralized this youth; 'now, what do you say to that? Do you call that fair? He can't be happy, and it's not in nature for them to be satisfied. And yet, if I went up and attempted to please them all by taking one away, the probabilities are that he would knock me down. Such is life! We won't be made comfortable!'

Nevertheless, he passed them with indifference, for it was merely the principle he objected to; and, indeed, he was so wrapped in his own conceptions, that his name had to be called behind him twice before he recognized Evan Harrington, Mrs. Strike, and Miss Bonner. The arrangement he had previously thought good, was then spontaneously adopted. Mrs. Strike reposed her fair hand upon his arm, and Juliana, with a timid glance of pleasure, walked ahead in Evan's charge. Close neighbourhood between the couples was not kept. The genius of Mr. Raikes was wasted in manoeuvres to lead his beautiful companion into places where he could be seen with her, and envied. It was, perhaps, more flattering that she should betray a marked disposition to prefer solitude in his society. But this idea illumined him only near the moment of parting. Then he saw it; then he groaned in soul, and besought Evan to have one more promenade, saying, with characteristic cleverness in the masking of his real thoughts: 'It gives us an appetite, you know.'

In Evan's face and Juliana's there was not much sign that any protraction of their walk together would aid this beneficent process of nature. He took her hand gently, and when he quitted it, it dropped.

'The Rose, the Rose of Beckley Court!' Raikes sang aloud. 'Why, this is a day of meetings. Behold John Thomas in the rear-a tower of plush and powder! Shall I rush-shall I pluck her from the aged stem?'

On the gravel-walk above them Rose passed with her aristocratic grandmother, muffled in furs. She marched deliberately, looking coldly before her. Evan's face was white, and Juliana, whose eyes were fixed on him, shuddered.

'I'm chilled,' she murmured to Caroline. 'Let us go.' Caroline eyed Evan with a meaning sadness.

'We will hurry to our carriage,' she said.

They were seen to make a little circuit so as not to approach Rose; after whom, thoughtless of his cruelty, Evan bent his steps slowly, halting when she reached her carriage. He believed—rather, he knew that she had seen him. There was a consciousness in the composed outlines of her face as she passed: the indifference was too perfect. Let her hate him if she pleased. It recompensed him that the air she wore should make her appearance more womanly; and that black dress and crape-bonnet, in some way, touched him to mournful thoughts of her that helped a partial forgetfulness of wounded self.

Rose had driven off. He was looking at the same spot, where Caroline's hand waved from her carriage. Juliana was not seen. Caroline requested her to nod to him once, but she would not. She leaned back hiding her eyes, and moving a petulant shoulder at Caroline's hand.

'Has he offended you, my child?'

Juliana answered harshly:

'No-no.'

The wheels rolled on, and Caroline tried other subjects, knowing possibly that they would lead Juliana back to this of her own accord.

'You saw how she treated him?' the latter presently said, without moving her hand from before her eyes.

'Yes, dear. He forgives her, and will forget it.'

'Oh!' she clenched her long thin hand, 'I pray that I may not die before I have made her repent it. She shall!'

Juliana looked glitteringly in Caroline's face, and then fell a-weeping, and suffered herself to be

folded and caressed. The storm was long subsiding.

'Dearest! you are better now?' said Caroline.

She whispered: 'Yes.'

'My brother has only to know you, dear—'

'Hush! That's past.' Juliana stopped her; and, on a deep breath that threatened to break to sobs, she added in a sweeter voice than was common to her, 'Ah, why—why did you tell him about the Beckley property?'

Caroline vainly strove to deny that she had told him. Juliana's head shook mournfully at her; and now Caroline knew what Juliana meant when she begged so earnestly that Evan should be kept ignorant of her change of fortune.

Some days after this the cold struck Juliana's chest, and she sickened. The three sisters held a sitting to consider what it was best to do with her. Caroline proposed to take her to Beckley without delay. Harriet was of opinion that the least they could do was to write to her relatives and make them instantly aware of her condition.

But the Countess said 'No,' to both. Her argument was, that Juliana being independent, they were by no means bound to 'bundle' her, in her state, back to a place where she had been so shamefully maltreated: that here she would live, while there she would certainly die: that absence of excitement was her medicine, and that here she had it. Mrs. Andrew, feeling herself responsible as the young lady's hostess, did not acquiesce in the Countess's views till she had consulted Juliana; and then apologies for giving trouble were breathed on the one hand; sympathy, condolences, and professions of esteem, on the other. Juliana said, she was but slightly ill, would soon recover. Entreated not to leave them before she was thoroughly re-established, and to consent to be looked on as one of the family, she sighed, and said it was the utmost she could hope. Of course the ladies took this compliment to themselves, but Evan began to wax in importance. The Countess thought it nearly time to acknowledge him, and supported the idea by a citation of the doctrine, that to forgive is Christian. It happened, however, that Harriet, who had less art and more will than her sisters, was inflexible. She, living in a society but a few steps above Tailorship, however magnificent in expenditure and resources, abhorred it solemnly. From motives of prudence, as well as personal disgust, she continued firm in declining to receive her brother. She would not relent when the Countess pointed out a dim, a dazzling prospect, growing out of Evan's proximity to the heiress of Beckley Court; she was not to be moved when Caroline suggested that the specific for the frail invalid was Evan's presence. As to this, Juliana was sufficiently open, though, as she conceived, her art was extreme.

'Do you know why I stay to vex and trouble you?' she asked Caroline. 'Well, then, it is that I may see your brother united to you all: and then I shall go, happy.'

The pretext served also to make him the subject of many conversations. Twice a week a bunch of the best flowers that could be got were sorted and arranged by her, and sent namelessly to brighten Evan's chamber.

'I may do such a thing as this, you know, without incurring blame,' she said.

The sight of a love so humble in its strength and affluence, sent Caroline to Evan on a fruitless errand. What availed it, that accused of giving lead to his pride in refusing the heiress, Evan should declare that he did not love her? He did not, Caroline admitted as possible, but he might. He might learn to love her, and therefore he was wrong in wounding her heart. She related flattering anecdotes. She drew tearful pictures of Juliana's love for him: and noticing how he seemed to prize his bouquet of flowers, said:

'Do you love them for themselves, or the hand that sent them?'

Evan blushed, for it had been a struggle for him to receive them, as he thought, from Rose in secret. The flowers lost their value; the song that had arisen out of them, 'Thou livest in my memory,' ceased. But they came still. How many degrees from love gratitude may be, I have not reckoned. I rather fear it lies on the opposite shore. From a youth to a girl, it may yet be very tender; the more so, because their ages commonly exclude such a sentiment, and nature seems willing to make a transition stage of it. Evan wrote to Juliana. Incidentally he expressed a wish to see her. Juliana was under doctor's interdict: but she was not to be prevented from going when Evan wished her to go. They met in the park, as before, and he talked to her five minutes through the carriage window.

'Was it worth the risk, my poor child?' said Caroline, pityingly.

Juliana cried: 'Oh! I would give anything to live!'

A man might have thought that she made no direct answer.

'Don't you think I am patient? Don't you think I am very patient?' she asked Caroline, winningly, on their way home.

Caroline could scarcely forbear from smiling at the feverish anxiety she showed for a reply that should confirm her words and hopes.

'So we must all be!' she said, and that common-place remark caused Juliana to exclaim: 'Prisoners have lived in a dungeon, on bread and water, for years!'

Whereat Caroline kissed her so tenderly that Juliana tried to look surprised, and failing, her thin lips quivered; she breathed a soft 'hush,' and fell on Caroline's bosom.

She was transparent enough in one thing; but the flame which burned within her did not light her through.

Others, on other matters, were quite as transparent to her.

Caroline never knew that she had as much as told her the moral suicide Evan had committed at Beckley; so cunningly had she been probed at intervals with little casual questions; random interjections, that one who loved him could not fail to meet; petty doubts requiring elucidations. And the Countess, kind as her sentiments had grown toward the afflicted creature, was compelled to proclaim her densely stupid in material affairs. For the Countess had an itch of the simplest feminine curiosity to know whether the dear child had any notion of accomplishing a certain holy duty of the perishable on this earth, who might possess worldly goods; and no hints—not even plain speaking, would do. Juliana did not understand her at all.

The Countess exhibited a mourning-ring on her finger, Mrs. Bonner's bequest to her.

'How fervent is my gratitude to my excellent departed friend for this!
A legacy, however trifling, embalms our dear lost ones in the memory!'

It was of no avail. Juliana continued densely stupid. Was she not worse? The Countess could not, 'in decency,' as she observed, reveal to her who had prompted Mrs. Bonner so to bequeath the Beckley estates as to 'ensure sweet Juliana's future'; but ought not Juliana to divine it?—Juliana at least had hints sufficient.

Cold Spring winds were now blowing. Juliana had resided no less than two months with the Cogglesbys. She was entreated still to remain, and she did. From Lady Jocelyn she heard not a word of remonstrance; but from Miss Carrington and Mrs. Shorne she received admonishing letters. Finally, Mr. Harry Jocelyn presented himself. In London, and without any of that needful subsistence which a young gentleman feels the want of in London more than elsewhere, Harry began to have thoughts of his own, without any instigation from his aunts, about devoting himself to business. So he sent his card up to his cousin, and was graciously met in the drawing-room by the Countess, who ruffled him and smoothed him, and would possibly have distracted his soul from business had his circumstances been less straitened. Juliana was declared to be too unwell to see him that day. He called a second time, and enjoyed a similar greeting. His third visit procured him an audience alone with Juliana, when, at once, despite the warnings of his aunts, the frank fellow plunged, 'medias res'. Mrs. Bonner had left him totally dependent on his parents and his chances.

'A desperate state of things, isn't it, Juley? I think I shall go for a soldier—common, you know.'

Instead of shrieking out against such a debasement of his worth and gentility, as was to be expected, Juliana said:

'That's what Mr. Harrington thought of doing.'

'He! If he'd had the pluck he would.'

'His duty forbade it, and he did not.'

'Duty! a confounded tailor! What fools we were to have him at Beckley!'

'Has the Countess been unkind to you Harry?'

'I haven't seen her to-day, and don't want to. It's my little dear old Juley I came for.'

'Dear Harry!' she thanked him with eyes and hands. 'Come often, won't you?'

'Why, ain't you coming back to us, Juley?'

'Not yet. They are very kind to me here. How is Rose?'

'Oh, quite jolly. She and Ferdinand are thick again. Balls every night. She dances like the deuce. They want me to go; but I ain't the sort of figure for those places, and besides, I shan't dance till I can lead you out.'

A spur of laughter at Harry's generous nod brought on Juliana's cough. Harry watched her little body shaken and her reddened eyes. Some real emotion—perhaps the fear which healthy young people experience at the sight of deadly disease—made Harry touch her arm with the softness of a child's touch.

'Don't be alarmed, Harry,' she said. 'It's nothing—only Winter. I'm determined to get well.'

'That's right,' quoth he, recovering. 'I know you've got pluck, or you wouldn't have stood that operation.'

'Let me see: when was that?' she asked slyly.

Harry coloured, for it related to a time when he had not behaved prettily to her.

'There, Juley, that 's all forgotten. I was a fool—a scoundrel, if you like. I 'm sorry for it now.'

'Do you want money, Harry?'

'Oh, money!'

'Have you repaid Mr. Harrington yet?'

'There—no, I haven't. Bother it! that fellow's name's always on your tongue. I'll tell you what, Juley—but it's no use. He's a low, vulgar adventurer.'

'Dear Harry,' said Juliana, softly; 'don't bring your aunts with you when you come to see me.'

'Well, then I'll tell you, Juley. It's enough that he's a beastly tailor.'

'Quite enough,' she responded; 'and he is neither a fool nor a scoundrel.'

Harry's memory for his own speech was not quick. When Juliana's calm glance at him called it up, he jumped from his chair, crying: 'Upon my honour, I'll tell you what, Juley! If I had money to pay him to-morrow, I'd insult him on the spot.'

Juliana meditated, and said: 'Then all your friends must wish you to continue poor.'

This girl had once been on her knees to him. She had looked up to him with admiring love, and he had given her a crumb or so occasionally, thinking her something of a fool, and more of a pest; but now he could not say a word to her without being baffled in an elderly-sisterly tone exasperating him so far that he positively wished to marry her, and coming to the point, offered himself with downright sincerity, and was rejected. Harry left in a passion. Juliana confided the secret to Caroline, who suggested interested motives, which Juliana would not hear of.

'Ah,' said the Countess, when Caroline mentioned the case to her, 'of course the poor thing cherishes her first offer. She would believe a curate to be disinterested! But mind that Evan has due warning when she is to meet him. Mind that he is dressed becomingly.'

Caroline asked why.

'Because, my dear, she is enamoured of his person. These little unhealthy creatures are always attracted by the person. She thinks it to be Evan's qualities. I know better: it is his person. Beckley Court may be lost by a shabby coat!'

The Countess had recovered from certain spiritual languors into which she had fallen after her retreat. Ultimate victory hung still in the balance. Oh! if Evan would only marry this little sufferer, who was so sure to die within a year! or, if she lived (for marriage has often been as a resurrection to some poor female invalids), there was Beckley Court, a splendid basis for future achievements. Reflecting in

this fashion, the Countess pardoned her brother. Glowing hopes hung fresh lamps in her charitable breast. She stepped across the threshold of Tailordom, won Mr. Goren's heart by her condescension, and worked Evan into a sorrowful mood concerning the invalid. Was not Juliana his only active friend? In return, he said things which only required a little colouring to be very acceptable to her.

The game waxed exciting again. The enemy (the Jocelyn party) was alert, but powerless. The three sisters were almost wrought to perform a sacrifice far exceeding Evan's. They nearly decided to summon him to the house: but the matter being broached at table one evening, Major Strike objected to it so angrily that they abandoned it, with the satisfactory conclusion that if they did wrong it was the Major's fault.

Meantime Juliana had much on her conscience. She knew Evan to be innocent, and she allowed Rose to think him guilty. Could she bring her heart to join them? That was not in her power: but desiring to be lulled by a compromise, she devoted herself to make his relatives receive him; and on days of bitter winds she would drive out to meet him, answering all expostulations with—'I should not go if he were here.'

The game waxed hot. It became a question whether Evan should be admitted to the house in spite of the Major. Juliana now made an extraordinary move. Having the Count with her in the carriage one day, she stopped in front of Mr. Goren's shop, and Evan had to come out. The Count returned home extremely mystified. Once more the unhappy Countess was obliged to draw bills on the fabulous; and as she had recommenced the system, which was not without its fascinations to her, Juliana, who had touched the spring, had the full benefit of it. The Countess had deceived her before—what of that? She spoke things sweet to hear. Who could be false that gave her heart food on which it lived?

One night Juliana returned from her drive alarmingly ill. She was watched through the night by Caroline and the Countess alternately. In the morning the sisters met.

'She has consented to let us send for a doctor,' said Caroline.

'Her chief desire seems to be a lawyer,' said the Countess.

'Yes, but the doctor must be sent for first.'

'Yes, indeed! But it behoves us to prewise that the doctor does not kill her before the lawyer comes.'

Caroline looked at Louisa, and said: 'Are you ignorant?'

'No—what?' cried the Countess eagerly.

'Evan has written to tell Lady Jocelyn the state of her health, and—'

'And that naturally has aggravated her malady!' The Countess cramped her long fingers. 'The child heard it from him yesterday! Oh, I could swear at that brother!'

She dropped into a chair and sat rigid and square-jawed, a sculpture of unutterable rage.

In the afternoon Lady Jocelyn arrived. The doctor was there—the lawyer had gone. Without a word of protest Juliana accompanied her ladyship to Beckley Court. Here was a blow!

But Andrew was preparing one more mighty still. What if the Cogglesby Brewery proved a basis most unsound? Where must they fall then? Alas! on that point whence they sprang. If not to Perdition—Tailordom!

CHAPTER XLI

REVEALS AN ABOMINABLE PLOT OF THE BROTHERS COGGLESBY

A lively April day, with strong gusts from the Southwest, and long sweeping clouds, saluted the morning coach from London to Lymport. Thither Tailordom triumphant was bearing its victim at a rattling pace, to settle him, and seal him for ever out of the ranks of gentlemen: Society, meantime, howling exclusion to him in the background: 'Out of our halls, degraded youth: The smiles of turbaned matrons: the sighs of delicate maids; genial wit, educated talk, refined scandal, vice in harness, dinners sentineled by stately plush: these, the flavour of life, are not for you, though you stole a taste of them,

wretched impostor! Pay for it with years of remorse!

The coach went rushing against the glorious high wind. It stirred his blood, freshened his cheeks, gave a bright tone of zest to his eyes, as he cast them on the young green country. Not banished from the breath of heaven, or from self-respect, or from the appetite for the rewards that are to follow duties done! Not banished from the help that is always reached to us when we have fairly taken the right road: and that for him is the road to Lymport. Let the kingdom of Gilt Gingerbread howl as it will! We are no longer children, but men: men who have bitten hard at experience, and know the value of a tooth: who have had our hearts bruised, and cover them with armour: who live not to feed, but look to food that we may live! What matters it that yonder high-spiced kingdom should excommunicate such as we are? We have rubbed off the guilt, and have assumed the command of our stomachs. We are men from this day!

Now, you would have thought Evan's companions, right and left of him, were the wretches under sentence, to judge from appearances. In contrast with his look of insolent pleasure, Andrew, the moment an eye was on him, exhibited the cleverest impersonation of the dumps ever seen: while Mr. Raikes was from head to foot nothing better than a moan made visible. Nevertheless, they both agreed to rally Evan, and bid him be of good cheer.

'Don't be down, Van; don't be down, my boy,' said Andrew, rubbing his hands gloomily.

'I? do I look it?' Evan answered, laughing.

'Capital acting!' exclaimed Raikes. 'Try and keep it up.'

'Well, I hope you're acting too,' said Evan.

Raikes let his chest fall like a collapsing bellows.

At the end of five minutes, he remarked: 'I've been sitting on it the whole morning! There's violent inflammation, I'm persuaded. Another hour, and I jump slap from the summit of the coach!'

Evan turned to Andrew.

'Do you think he'll be let off?'

'Mr. Raikes? Can't say. You see, Van, it depends upon how Old Tom has taken his bad luck. Ahem! Perhaps he'll be all the stricter; and as a man of honour, Mr. Raikes, you see, can't very well—'

'By Jove! I wish I wasn't a man of honour!' Raikes interposed, heavily.

'You see, Van, Old Tom's circumstances'—Andrew ducked, to smother a sort of laughter—'are now such that he'd be glad of the money to let him off, no doubt; but Mr. Raikes has spent it, I can't lend it, and you haven't got it, and there we all are. At the end of the year he's free, and he— ha! ha! I'm not a bit the merrier for laughing, I can tell you.'

Catching another glimpse of Evan's serious face, Andrew fell into louder laughter; checking it with doleful solemnity.

Up hill and down hill, and past little homesteads shining with yellow crocuses; across wide brown heaths, whose outlines raised in Evan's mind the night of his funeral walk, and tossed up old feelings dead as the whirling dust. At last Raikes called out:

'The towers of Fallow field; heigho!'

And Andrew said:

'Now then, Van: if Old Tom's anywhere, he's here. You get down at the Dragon, and don't you talk to me, but let me go in. It'll be just the hour he dines in the country. Isn't it a shame of him to make me face every man of the creditors—eh?'

Evan gave Andrew's hand an affectionate squeeze, at which Andrew had to gulp down something—reciprocal emotion, doubtless.

'Hark,' said Raikes, as the horn of the guard was heard. 'Once that sound used to set me caracoling before an abject multitude. I did wonders. All London looked on me! It had more effect on me than champagne. Now I hear it—the whole charm has vanished! I can't see a single old castle. Would you have thought it possible that a small circular bit of tin on a man's person could produce such changes in him?'

'You are a donkey to wear it,' said Evan.

'I pledged my word as a gentleman, and thought it small, for the money!' said Raikes. 'This is the first coach I ever travelled on, without making the old whip burst with laughing. I'm not myself. I'm haunted. I'm somebody else.'

The three passengers having descended, a controversy commenced between Evan and Andrew as to which should pay. Evan had his money out; Andrew dashed it behind him; Evan remonstrated.

'Well, you mustn't pay for us two, Andrew. I would have let you do it once, but—'

'Stuff!' cried Andrew. 'I ain't paying—it 's the creditors of the estate, my boy!'

Evan looked so ingenuously surprised and hurt at his lack of principle, that Andrew chucked a sixpence at a small boy, saying,

'If you don't let me have my own way, Van, I 'll shy my purse after it. What do you mean, sir, by treating me like a beggar?'

'Our friend Harrington can't humour us,' quoth Raikes. 'For myself, I candidly confess I prefer being paid for'; and he leaned contentedly against one of the posts of the inn till the filthy dispute was arranged to the satisfaction of the ignobler mind. There Andrew left them, and went to Mrs. Sockley, who, recovered from her illness, smiled her usual placid welcome to a guest.

'You know me, ma'am?'

'Oh, yes! The London Mr. Cogglesby!'

'Now, ma'am, look here. I've come for my brother. Don't be alarmed. No danger as yet. But, mind! if you attempt to conceal him from his lawful brother, I'll summon here the myrmidons of the law.'

Mrs. Sockley showed a serious face.

'You know his habits, Mr. Cogglesby; and one doesn't go against any one of his whimsies, or there's consequences: but the house is open to you, sir. I don't wish to hide him.'

Andrew accepted this intelligent evasion of Tom Cogglesby's orders as sufficient, and immediately proceeded upstairs. A door shut on the first landing. Andrew went to this door and knocked. No answer. He tried to open it, but found that he had been forestalled. After threatening to talk business through the key-hole, the door was unlocked, and Old Tom appeared.

'So! now you're dogging me into the country. Be off; make an appointment. Saturday's my holiday. You know that.'

Andrew pushed through the doorway, and, by way of an emphatic reply and a silencing one, delivered a punch slap into Old Tom's belt.

'Confound you, Nan!' said Old Tom, grimacing, but friendly, as if his sympathies had been irresistibly assailed.

'It 's done, Tom! I've done it. Won my bet, now,' Andrew exclaimed. 'The women-poor creatures! What a state they're in. I pity 'em.'

Old Tom pursed his lips, and eyed his brother incredulously, but with curious eagerness.

'Oh, Lord! what a face I've had to wear!' Andrew continued, and while he sank into a chair and rubbed his handkerchief over his crisp hair, Old Tom let loose a convinced and exulting, 'ha! ha!'

'Yes, you may laugh. I've had all the bother,' said Andrew.

'Serve ye right—marrying such cattle,' Old Tom snapped at him.

'They believe we're bankrupt—owe fifty thousand clear, Tom!'

'Ha! ha!'

'Brewery stock and household furniture to be sold by general auction, Friday week.'

'Ha! ha!'

'Not a place for any of us to poke our heads into. I talked about "pitiless storms" to my poor Harry—no shelter to be had unless we go down to Lymport, and stop with their brother in shop!'

Old Tom did enjoy this. He took a great gulp of air for a tremendous burst of laughter, and when this was expended and reflection came, his features screwed, as if the acidest of flavours had ravished his palate.

'Bravo, Nan! Didn't think you were man enough. Ha! ha! Nan—I say— eh? how did ye get on behind. the curtains?'

The tale, to guess by Andrew's face, appeared to be too strongly infused with pathos for revelation.

'Will they go, Nan, eh? d' ye think they 'll go?'

'Where else can they go, Tom? They must go there, or on the parish, you know.'

'They'll all troop down to the young tailor—eh?'

'They can't sleep in the parks, Tom.'

'No. They can't get into Buckingham Palace, neither—'cept as housemaids. 'Gad, they're howling like cats, I'd swear—nuisance to the neighbourhood—ha! ha!'

Old Tom's cruel laughter made Andrew feel for the unhappy ladies. He stuck his forehead, and leaned forward, saying: 'I don't know—'pon my honour, I don't know—can't think we've—quite done right to punish 'em so.'

This acted like cold water on Old Tom's delight. He pitched it back in the shape of a doubt of what Andrew had told him. Whereupon Andrew defied him to face three miserable women on the verge of hysterics; and Old Tom, beginning to chuckle again, rejoined that it would bring them to their senses, and emancipate him.

'You may laugh, Mr. Tom,' said Andrew; 'but if poor Harry should find me out, deuce a bit more home for me.'

Old Tom looked at him keenly, and rapped the table. 'Swear you did it, Nan.'

'You promise you'll keep the secret,' said Andrew.

'Never make promises.'

'Then there's a pretty life for me! I did it for that poor dear boy. You were only up to one of your jokes—I see that. Confound you, Old Tom, you've been making a fool of me.'

The flattering charge was not rejected by Old Tom, who now had his brother to laugh at as well. Andrew affected to be indignant and desperate.

'If you'd had a heart, Tom, you'd have saved the poor fellow without any bother at all. What do you think? When I told him of our smash—ha! ha! it isn't such a bad joke—well, I went to him, hanging my head, and he offered to arrange our affairs—that is—'

'Damned meddlesome young dog!' cried Old Tom, quite in a rage.

'There—you're up in a twinkling,' said Andrew. 'Don't you see he believed it, you stupid Old Tom? Lord! to hear him say how sorry he was, and to see how glad he looked at the chance of serving us!'

'Serving us!' Tom sneered.

'Ha!' went Andrew. 'Yes. There. You're a deuced deal prouder than fifty peers. You're an upside-down old despot!'

No sharper retort rising to Old Tom's lips, he permitted his brother's abuse of him to pass, declaring that bandying words was not his business, he not being a Parliament man.

'How about the Major, Nan? He coming down, too?'

'Major!' cried Andrew. 'Lucky if he keeps his commission. Coming down? No. He's off to the Continent.'

'Find plenty of scamps there to keep him company,' added Tom. 'So he's broke—eh? ha! ha!'

'Tom,' said Andrew, seriously, 'I'll tell you all about it, if you 'll swear not to split on me, because it would really upset poor Harry so. She 'd think me such a beastly hypocrite, I couldn't face her afterwards.'

'Lose what pluck you have—eh?' Tom jerked out his hand, and bade his brother continue.

Compelled to trust in him without a promise, Andrew said: 'Well, then, after we'd arranged it, I went back to Harry, and begged her to have poor Van at the house told her what I hoped you'd do for him about getting him into the Brewery. She's very kind, Tom, 'pon my honour she is. She was willing, only —'

'Only—eh?'

'Well, she was so afraid it'd hurt her sisters to see him there.'

Old Tom saw he was in for excellent fun, and wouldn't spoil it for the world.

'Yes, Nan?'

'So I went to Caroline. She was easy enough; and she went to the Countess.'

'Well, and she—?'

'She was willing, too, till Lady Jocelyn came and took Miss Bonner home to Beckley, and because Evan had written to my lady to fetch her, the Countess—she was angry. That was all. Because of that, you know. But yet she agreed. But when Miss Bonner had gone, it turned out that the Major was the obstacle. They were all willing enough to have Evan there, but the Major refused. I didn't hear him. I wasn't going to ask him. I mayn't be a match for three women, but man to man, eh, Tom? You'd back me there? So Harry said the Major 'd make Caroline miserable, if his wishes were disrespected. By George, I wish I'd know, then. Don't you think it odd, Tom, now? There's a Duke of Belfield the fellow had hooked into his Company; and—through Evan I heard—the Duke had his name struck off. After that, the Major swore at the Duke once or twice, and said Caroline wasn't to go out with him. Suddenly, he insists that she shall go. Days the poor thing kept crying! One day, he makes her go. She hasn't the spirit of my Harry or the Countess. By good luck, Van, who was hunting ferns for some friends of his, met them on Sunday in Richmond Park, and Van took her away from the Duke. But, Tom, think of Van seeing a fellow watching her wherever she went, and hearing the Duke's coachman tell that fellow he had orders to drive his master and a lady hard on to the sea that night. I don't believe it—it wasn't Caroline! But what do you think of our finding out that beast of a spy to be in the Major's pay? We did. Van put a constable on his track; we found him out, and he confessed it. A fact, Tom! That decided me. If it was only to get rid of a brute, I determined I 'd do it, and I did. Strike came to me to get my name for a bill that night. 'Gad, he looked blanker than his bill when he heard of us two bankrupt. I showed him one or two documents I'd got ready. Says he: "Never mind; it'll only be a couple of hundred more in the schedule." Stop, Tom! he's got some of our blood. I don't think he meant it. He is hard pushed. Well, I gave him a twentier, and he was off the next night. You 'll soon see all about the Company in the papers.'

At the conclusion of Andrew's recital, Old Tom thrummed and looked on the floor under a heavy frown. His mouth worked dubiously, and, from moment to moment, he plucked at his waistcoat and pulled it down, throwing back his head and glaring.

'I 've knocked that fellow over once,' he said. 'Wish he hadn't got up again.'

Andrew nodded.

'One good thing, Nan. He never boasted of our connection. Much obliged to him.'

'Yes,' said Andrew, who was gladly watching Old Tom's change of mood with a quiescent aspect.

'Um!—must keep it quiet from his poor old mother.'

Andrew again affirmated his senior's remarks. That his treatment of Old Tom was sound, he presently had proof of. The latter stood up, and after sniffing in an injured way for about a minute, launched out his right leg, and vociferated that he would like to have it in his power to kick all the villains out of the world: a modest demand Andrew at once chimed in with; adding that, were such a faculty extended to him, he would not object to lose the leg that could benefit mankind so infinitely, and consented to its following them. Then, Old Tom, who was of a practical turn, meditated, swung his foot,

and gave one grim kick at the imaginary bundle of villains, discharged them headlong straight into space. Andrew, naturally imitative, and seeing that he had now to kick them flying, attempted to excel Old Tom in the vigour of his delivery. No wonder that the efforts of both were heating: they were engaged in the task of ridding the globe of the larger half of its inhabitants. Tom perceived Andrew's useless emulation, and with a sound translated by 'yack,' sent his leg out a long way. Not to be outdone, Andrew immediately, with a still louder 'yack,' committed himself to an effort so violent that the alternative between his leg coming off, or his being taken off his leg, was propounded by nature, and decided by the laws of gravity in a trice. Joyful grunts were emitted by Old Tom at the sight of Andrew prostrate, rubbing his pate. But Mrs. Sockley, to whom the noise of Andrew's fall had suggested awful fears of a fratricidal conflict upstairs, hurried forthwith to announce to them that the sovereign remedy for human ills, the promoter of concord, the healer of feuds, the central point of man's destiny in the flesh—Dinner, was awaiting them.

To the dinner they marched.

Of this great festival be it simply told that the supply was copious and of good quality—much too good and copious for a bankrupt host: that Evan and Mr. John Raikes were formally introduced to Old Tom before the repast commenced, and welcomed some three minutes after he had decided the flavour of his first glass; that Mr. Raikes in due time preferred his petition for release from a dreadful engagement, and furnished vast amusement to the company under Old Tom's hand, until, by chance, he quoted a scrap of Latin, at which the brothers Cogglesby, who would have faced peers and princes without being disconcerted, or performing mental genuflexions, shut their mouths and looked injured, unhappy, and in the presence of a superior: Mr. Raikes not being the man to spare them. Moreover, a surprise was afforded to Evan. Andrew stated to Old Tom that the hospitality of Main Street, Lymport, —was open to him. Strange to say, Old Tom accepted it on the spot, observing, 'You're master of the house—can do what you like, if you 're man enough,' and adding that he thanked him, and would come in a day or two. The case of Mr. Raikes was still left uncertain, for as the bottle circulated, he exhibited such a faculty for apt, but to the brothers, totally incomprehensible quotation, that they fled from him without leaving him time to remember what special calamity was on his mind, or whether this earth was other than an abode conceived in great jollity for his life-long entertainment.

CHAPTER XLII

JULIANA

The sick night-light burned steadily in Juliana's chamber. On a couch, beside her bed, Caroline lay sleeping, tired with a long watch. Two sentences had been passed on Juliana: one on her heart: one on her body: 'Thou art not loved'; and, 'Thou must die.' The frail passion of her struggle against her destiny was over with her. Quiet as that quiet which Nature was taking her to, her body reposed. Calm as the solitary night-light before her open eyes, her spirit was wasting away. 'If I am not loved, then let me die!' In such a sense she bowed to her fate.

At an hour like this, watching the round of light on the ceiling, with its narrowing inner rings, a sufferer from whom pain has fled looks back to the shores she is leaving, and would be well with them who walk there. It is false to imagine that schemers and workers in the dark are destitute of the saving gift of conscience. They have it, and it is perhaps made livelier in them than with easy people; and therefore, they are imperatively spurred to hoodwink it. Hence, their self-delusion is deep and endures. They march to their object, and gaining or losing it, the voice that calls to them is the voice of a blind creature, whom any answer, provided that the answer is ready, will silence. And at an hour like this, when finally they snatch their minute of sight on the threshold of black night, their souls may compare with yonder shining circle on the ceiling, which, as the light below gasps for air, contracts, and extends but to mingle with the darkness. They would be nobler, better, boundlessly good to all;—to those who have injured them to those whom they have injured. Alas! for any definite deed the limit of their circle is immovable, and they must act within it. The trick they have played themselves imprisons them. Beyond it, they cease to be.

Lying in this utter stillness, Juliana thought of Rose; of her beloved by Evan. The fever that had left her blood, had left it stagnant, and her thoughts were quite emotionless. She looked faintly on a far picture. She saw Rose blooming with pleasures in Elburne House, sliding as a boat borne by the river's tide to sea, away from her living joy. The breast of Rose was lucid to her, and in that hour of insight she had clear knowledge of her cousin's heart; how it scoffed at its base love, and unwittingly betrayed the power on her still, by clinging to the world and what it would give her to fill the void; how externally the lake was untroubled, and a mirror to the passing day; and how within there pressed a flood against an iron dam. Evan, too, she saw. The Countess was right in her judgement of Juliana's love. Juliana

looked very little to his qualities. She loved him when she thought him guilty, which made her conceive that her love was of a diviner cast than Rose was capable of. Guilt did not spoil his beauty to her; his gentleness and glowing manhood were unchanged; and when she knew him as he was, the revelation of his high nature simply confirmed her impression of his physical perfections. She had done him a wrong; at her death news would come to him, and it might be that he would bless her name. Because she sighed no longer for those dear lips and strong arms to close about her tremulous frame, it seemed to her that she had quite surrendered him. Generous to Evan, she would be just to Rose. Beneath her pillow she found pencil and paper, and with difficulty, scarce seeing her letters in the brown light, she began to trace lines of farewell to Rose. Her conscience dictated to her thus, 'Tell Rose that she was too ready to accept his guilt; and that in this as in all things, she acted with the precipitation of her character. Tell her that you always trusted, and that now you know him innocent. Give her the proofs you have. Show that he did it to shield his intriguing sister. Tell her that you write this only to make her just to him. End with a prayer that Rose may be happy.'

Ere Juliana had finished one sentence, she resigned the pencil. Was it not much, even at the gates of death, to be the instrument to send Rose into his arms? The picture swayed before her, helping her weakness. She found herself dreaming that he had kissed her once. Dorothy, she remembered, had danced up to her one day, to relate what the maids of the house said of the gentleman—(at whom, it is known, they look with the licence of cats toward kings); and Dorothy's fresh careless mouth had told how one observant maid, amorously minded, proclaimed of Evan, to a companion of her sex, that, 'he was the only gentleman who gave you an idea of how he would look when he was kissing you.' Juliana cherished that vision likewise. Young ladies are not supposed to do so, if menial maids are; but Juliana did cherish it, and it possessed her fancy. Bear in your recollection that she was not a healthy person. Diseased little heroines may be made attractive, and are now popular; but strip off the cleverly woven robe which is fashioned to cover them, and you will find them in certain matters bearing a resemblance to menial maids.

While the thoughts of his kiss lasted, she could do nothing; but lay with her two hands out on the bed, and her eyelids closed. Then waking, she took the pencil again. It would not move: her bloodless fingers fell from it.

'If they do not meet, and he never marries, I may claim him in the next world,' she mused.

But conscience continued uneasy. She turned her wrist and trailed a letter from beneath the pillow. It was from Mrs. Shorne. Juliana knew the contents. She raised it unopened as high as her faltering hands permitted, and read like one whose shut eyes read syllables of fire on the darkness.

'Rose has at last definitely engaged herself to Ferdinand, you will be glad to hear, and we may now treat her as a woman.'

Having absorbed these words, Juliana's hand found strength to write, with little difficulty, what she had to say to Rose. She conceived it to be neither sublime nor generous: not even good; merely her peculiar duty. When it was done, she gave a long, low sigh of relief.

Caroline whispered, 'Dearest child, are you awake?'

'Yes,' she answered.

'Sorrowful, dear?'

'Very quiet.'

Caroline reached her hand over to her, and felt the paper. 'What is this?'

'My good-bye to Rose. I want it folded now.'

Caroline slipped from the couch to fulfil her wish. She enclosed the pencilled scrap of paper, sealed it, and asked, 'Is that right?'

'Now unlock my desk,' Juliana uttered, feebly. 'Put it beside a letter addressed to a law-gentleman. Post both the morning I am gone.'

Caroline promised to obey, and coming to Juliana to mark her looks, observed a faint pleased smile dying away, and had her hand gently squeezed. Juliana's conscience had preceded her contentedly to its last sleep; and she, beneath that round of light on the ceiling, drew on her counted breaths in peace till dawn.

CHAPTER XLIII

ROSE

Have you seen a young audacious spirit smitten to the earth? It is a singular study; and, in the case of young women, a trap for inexperienced men. Rose, who had commanded and managed every one surrounding her since infancy, how humble had she now become!—how much more womanly in appearance, and more child-like at heart! She was as wax in Lady Elburne's hands. A hint of that veiled episode, the Beckley campaign, made Rose pliant, as if she had woven for herself a rod of scorpions. The high ground she had taken; the perfect trust in one; the scorn of any judgement, save her own; these had vanished from her. Rose, the tameless heroine who had once put her mother's philosophy in action, was the easiest filly that turbaned matron ever yet drove into the straight road of the world. It even surprised Lady Jocelyn to see how wonderfully she had been broken in by her grandmother. Her ladyship wrote to Drummond to tell him of it, and Drummond congratulated her, saying, however: 'Changes of this sort don't come of conviction. Wait till you see her at home. I think they have been sticking pins into the sore part.'

Drummond knew Rose well. In reality there was no change in her. She was only a suppliant to be spared from ridicule: spared from the application of the scourge she had woven for herself.

And, ah! to one who deigned to think warmly still of such a disgraced silly creature, with what gratitude she turned! He might well suppose love alone could pour that profusion of jewels at his feet.

Ferdinand, now Lord Laxley, understood the merits of his finger-nails better than the nature of young women; but he is not to be blamed for presuming that Rose had learnt to adore him. Else why did she like his company so much? He was not mistaken in thinking she looked up to him. She seemed to beg to be taken into his noble serenity. In truth she sighed to feel as he did, above everybody!—she that had fallen so low! Above everybody!—born above them, and therefore superior by grace divine! To this Rose Jocelyn had come—she envied the mind of Ferdinand.

He, you may be sure, was quite prepared to accept her homage. Rose he had always known to be just the girl for him; spirited, fresh, and with fine teeth; and once tied to you safe to be staunch. They walked together, rode together, danced together. Her soft humility touched him to eloquence. Say she was a little hypocrite, if you like, when the blood came to her cheeks under his eyes. Say she was a heartless minx for allowing it to be bruited that she and Ferdinand were betrothed. I can but tell you that her blushes were blushes of gratitude to one who could devote his time to such a disgraced silly creature, and that she, in her abject state, felt a secret pleasure in the protection Ferdinand's name appeared to extend over her, and was hardly willing to lose it.

So far Lady Elburne's tact and discipline had been highly successful. One morning, in May, Ferdinand, strolling with Rose down the garden made a positive appeal to her common sense and friendly feeling; by which she understood that he wanted her consent to his marriage with her.

Rose answered:

'Who would have me?'

Ferdinand spoke pretty well, and ultimately got possession of her hand. She let him keep it, thinking him noble for forgetting that another had pressed it before him.

Some minutes later the letters were delivered. One of them contained Juliana's dark-winged missive.

'Poor, poor Juley!' said Rose, dropping her head, after reading all that was on the crumpled leaf with an inflexible face. And then, talking on, long low sighs lifted her bosom at intervals. She gazed from time to time with a wistful conciliatory air on Ferdinand. Rushing to her chamber, the first cry her soul framed was:

'He did not kiss me!'

The young have a superstitious sense of something incontestably true in the final protestations of the dead. Evan guiltless! she could not quite take the meaning this revelation involved. That which had been dead was beginning to move within her; but blindly; and now it stirred and troubled; now sank. Guiltless all she had thought him! Oh! she knew she could not have been deceived. But why, why had he hidden his sacrifice from her?

'It is better for us both, of course,' said Rose, speaking the world's wisdom, parrot-like, and bursting

into tears the next minute. Guiltless, and gloriously guiltless! but nothing—nothing to her!

She tried to blame him. It would not do. She tried to think of that grovelling loathsome position painted to her by Lady Elburne's graphic hand. Evan dispersed the gloomy shades like sunshine. Then in a sort of terror she rejoiced to think she was partially engaged to Ferdinand, and found herself crying again with exultation, that he had not kissed her: for a kiss on her mouth was to Rose a pledge and a bond.

The struggle searched her through: bared her weakness, probed her strength; and she, seeing herself, suffered grievously in her self-love. Am I such a coward, inconstant, cold? she asked. Confirmatory answers coming, flung her back under the shield of Ferdinand if for a moment her soul stood up armed and defiant, it was Evan's hand she took.

To whom do I belong? was another terrible question. In her ideas, if Evan was not chargeable with that baseness which had sundered them he might claim her yet, if he would. If he did, what then? Must she go to him?

Impossible: she was in chains. Besides, what a din of laughter there would be to see her led away by him. Twisting her joined hands: weeping for her cousin, as she thought, Rose passed hours of torment over Juliana's legacy to her.

'Why did I doubt him?' she cried, jealous that any soul should have known and trusted him better. Jealous and I am afraid that the kindling of that one feature of love relighted the fire of her passion thus fervidly. To be outstripped in generosity was hateful to her. Rose, naturally, could not reflect that a young creature like herself, fighting against the world, as we call it, has all her faculties at the utmost stretch, and is often betrayed by failing nature when the will is still valiant.

And here she sat-in chains! 'Yes! I am fit only to be the wife of an idle brainless man, with money and a title,' she said, in extreme self- contempt. She caught a glimpse of her whole life in the horrid tomb of his embrace, and questions whether she could yield her hand to him— whether it was right in the eyes of heaven, rushed impetuously to console her, and defied anything in the shape of satisfactory affirmations. Nevertheless, the end of the struggle was, that she felt that she was bound to Ferdinand.

'But this I will do,' said Rose, standing with heat-bright eyes and deep- coloured cheeks before the glass. 'I will clear his character at Beckley. I will help him. I will be his friend. I will wipe out the injustice I did him.' And this bride-elect of a lord absolutely added that she was unworthy to be the wife of a tailor!

'He! how unequalled he is! There is nothing he fears except shame. Oh! how sad it will be for him to find no woman in his class to understand him and be his helpmate!'

Over, this sad subject, of which we must presume her to be accurately cognizant, Rose brooded heavily. By mid-day she gave her Grandmother notice that she was going home to Juliana's funeral.

'Well, Rose, if you think it necessary to join the ceremony,' said Lady Elburne. 'Beckley is bad quarters for you, as you have learnt. There was never much love between you cousins.'

'No, and I don't pretend to it,' Rose answered. 'I am sorry poor Juley's gone.'

'She's better gone for many reasons—she appears to have been a little venomous toad,' said Lady Elburne; and Rose, thinking of a snakelike death-bite working through her blood, rejoined: 'Yes, she isn't to be pitied she 's better off than most people.'

So it was arranged that Rose should go. Ferdinand and her aunt, Mrs. Shorne, accompanied her. Mrs. Shorne gave them their opportunities, albeit they were all stowed together in a carriage, and Ferdinand seemed willing to profit by them; but Rose's hand was dead, and she sat by her future lord forming the vow on her lips that they should never be touched by him.

Arrived at Beckley, she, to her great delight, found Caroline there, waiting for the funeral. In a few minutes she got her alone, and after kisses, looked penetratingly into her lovely eyes, shook her head, and said: 'Why were you false to me?'

'False?' echoed Caroline.

'You knew him. You knew why he did that. Why did you not save me?'

Caroline fell upon her neck, asking pardon. She spared her the recital of facts further than the broad avowal. Evan's present condition she plainly stated: and Rose, when the bitter pangs had ceased, made oath to her soul she would rescue him from it.

In addition to the task of clearing Evan's character, and rescuing him, Rose now conceived that her engagement to Ferdinand must stand ice-bound till Evan had given her back her troth. How could she obtain it from him? How could she take anything from one so noble and so poor! Happily there was no hurry; though before any bond was ratified, she decided conscientiously that it must be done.

You see that like a lithe snake she turns on herself, and must be tracked in and out. Not being a girl to solve the problem with tears, or outright perfidy, she had to ease her heart to the great shock little by little—sincere as far as she knew: as far as one who loves may be. The day of the funeral came and went. The Jocelyns were of their mother's opinion: that for many reasons Juliana was better out of the way. Mrs. Bonner's bequest had been a severe blow to Sir Franks. However, all was now well. The estate naturally lapsed to Lady Jocelyn. No one in the house dreamed of a will, signed with Juliana's name, attested, under due legal forms, being in existence. None of the members of the family imagined that at Beckley Court they were then residing on somebody else's ground.

Want of hospitable sentiments was not the cause that led to an intimation from Sir Franks to his wife, that Mrs. Strike must not be pressed to remain, and that Rose must not be permitted to have her own way in this. Knowing very well that Mrs. Shorne spoke through her husband's mouth, Lady Jocelyn still acquiesced, and Rose, who had pressed Caroline publicly to stay, had to be silent when the latter renewed her faint objections; so Caroline said she would leave on the morrow morning.

Juliana, with her fretfulness, her hand bounties, her petty egoisms, and sudden far-leaping generousities, and all the contradictory impulses of her malady, had now departed utterly. The joys of a landed proprietor mounted into the head of Sir Franks. He was up early the next morning, and he and Harry walked over a good bit of the ground before breakfast. Sir Franks meditated making it entail, and favoured Harry with a lecture on the duty of his shaping the course of his conduct at once after the model of the landed gentry generally.

'And you may think yourself lucky to come into that catalogue—the son of a younger son!' said Sir Franks, tapping Mr. Harry's shoulder. Harry also began to enjoy the look and smell of land. At the breakfast, which, though early, was well attended, Harry spoke of the adviseability of felling timber here, planting there, and so forth, after the model his father held up. Sir Franks nodded approval of his interest in the estate, but reserved his opinion on matters of detail.

'All I beg of you is,' said Lady Jocelyn, 'that you won't let us have turnips within the circuit of a mile'; which was obligingly promised.

The morning letters were delivered and opened with the customary calmness.

'Letter from old George,' Harry sings out, and buzzes over a few lines. 'Halloa!—Hum!' He was going to make a communication, but catching sight of Caroline, tossed the letter over to Ferdinand, who read it and tossed it back with the comment of a careless face.

'Read it, Rosey?' says Harry, smiling bluntly.

Rather to his surprise, Rose took the letter. Study her eyes if you wish to gauge the potency of one strong dose of ridicule on an ingenuous young heart. She read that Mr. George Uplift had met 'our friend Mr. Snip' riding, by moonlight, on the road to Beckley. That great orb'd night of their deep tender love flashed luminously through her frame, storming at the base epithet by which her lover was mentioned, flooding grandly over the ignominies cast on him by the world. She met the world, as it were, in a death-grapple; she matched the living heroic youth she felt him to be, with that dead wooden image of him which it thrust before her. Her heart stood up singing like a craven who sees the tide of victory setting toward him. But this passed beneath her eyelids. When her eyes were lifted, Ferdinand could have discovered nothing in them to complain of, had his suspicions been light to raise: nor could Mrs. Shorne perceive that there was the opening for a shrewd bodkin-thrust. Rose had got a mask at last: her colour, voice, expression, were perfectly at command. She knew it to be a cowardice to wear any mask: but she had been burnt, horribly burnt: how much so you may guess from the supple dissimulation of such a bold clear-visaged girl. She conquered the sneers of the world in her soul: but her sensitive skin was yet alive to the pangs of the scorching it had been subjected to when weak, helpless, and betrayed by Evan, she stood with no philosophic parent to cry fair play for her, among the skilful torturers of Elburne House.

Sir Franks had risen and walked to the window.

'News?' said Lady Jocelyn, wheeling round in her chair.

The one eyebrow up of the easy-going baronet signified trouble of mind. He finished his third perusal of a letter that appeared to be written in a remarkably plain legal hand, and looking as men do when their intelligences are just equal to the comprehension or expression of an oath, handed the letter to

his wife, and observed that he should be found in the library. Nevertheless he waited first to mark its effect on Lady Jocelyn. At one part of the document her forehead wrinkled slightly.

'Doesn't sound like a joke!' he said.

She answered:

'No.'

Sir Franks, apparently quite satisfied by her ready response, turned on his heel and left the room quickly.

An hour afterward it was rumoured and confirmed that Juliana Bonner had willed all the worldly property she held in her own right, comprising Beckley Court, to Mr. Evan Harrington, of Lymport, tailor. An abstract of the will was forwarded. The lawyer went on to say, that he had conformed to the desire of the testatrix in communicating the existence of the aforesaid will six days subsequent to her death, being the day after her funeral.

There had been railing and jeering at the Countess de Saldar, the clever outwitted exposed adventuress, at Elburne House and Beckley Court. What did the crowing cleverer aristocrats think of her now?

On Rose the blow fell bitterly. Was Evan also a foul schemer? Was he of a piece with his intriguing sister? His close kinship with the Countess had led her to think baseness possible to him when it was confessed by his own mouth once. She heard black names cast at him and the whole of the great Mel's brood, and incapable of quite disbelieving them merited, unable to challenge and rebut them, she dropped into her recent state of self-contempt: into her lately-instilled doubt whether it really was in Nature's power, unaided by family-portraits, coats-of-arms, ball-room practice, and at least one small phial of Essence of Society, to make a Gentleman.

CHAPTER XLIV

CONTAINS A WARNING TO ALL CONSPIRATORS

This, if you have done me the favour to read it aright, has been a chronicle of desperate heroism on the part of almost all the principal personages represented. But not the Countess de Saldar, scaling the embattled fortress of Society; nor Rose, tossing its keys to her lover from the shining turret-tops; nor Evan, keeping bright the lamp of self-respect in his bosom against South wind and East; none excel friend Andrew Cogglesby, who, having fallen into Old Tom's plot to humiliate his wife and her sisters, simply for Evan's sake, and without any distinct notion of the terror, confusion, and universal upset he was bringing on his home, could yet, after a scared contemplation of the scene when he returned from his expedition to Fallow field, continue to wear his rueful mask; and persevere in treacherously outraging his lofty wife.

He did it to vindicate the ties of blood against accidents of position. Was he justified? I am sufficiently wise to ask my own sex alone.

On the other side, be it said (since in our modern days every hero must have his weak heel), that now he had gone this distance it was difficult to recede. It would be no laughing matter to tell his solemn Harriet that he had been playing her a little practical joke. His temptations to give it up were incessant and most agitating; but if to advance seemed terrific, there was, in stopping short, an awfulness so overwhelming that Andrew abandoned himself to the current, his real dismay adding to his acting powers.

The worst was, that the joke was no longer his: it was Old Tom's. He discovered that he was in Old Tom's hands completely. Andrew had thought that he would just frighten the women a bit, get them down to Lymport for a week or so, and then announce that matters were not so bad with the Brewery as he had feared; concluding the farce with a few domestic fireworks. Conceive his dismay when he entered the house, to find there a man in possession.

Andrew flew into such a rage that he committed an assault on the man. So ungovernable was his passion, that for some minutes Harriet's measured voice summoned him from over the banisters above, quite in vain. The miserable Englishman refused to be taught that his house had ceased to be his castle.

It was something beyond a joke, this! The intruder, perfectly docile, seeing that by accurate calculation every shake he got involved a bottle of wine for him, and ultimate compensation probably to the amount of a couple of sovereigns, allowed himself to be lugged up stairs, in default of summary ejection on the point of Andrew's toe into the street. There he was faced to the lady of the house, who apologized to him, and requested her husband to state what had made him guilty of this indecent behaviour. The man showed his papers. They were quite in order. 'At the suit of Messrs. Grist.'

'My own lawyers!' cried Andrew, smacking his forehead; and Old Tom's devilry flashed on him at once. He sank into a chair.

'Why did you bring this person up here?' said Harriet, like a speaking statue.

'My dear!' Andrew answered, and spread out his hand, and waggled his head; 'My—please!—I—I don't know. We all want exercise.'

The man laughed, which was kindly of him, but offensive to Mrs. Cogglesby, who gave Andrew a glance which was full payment for his imbecile pleasantry, and promised more.

With a hospitable inquiry as to the condition of his appetite, and a request that he would be pleased to satisfy it to the full, the man was dismissed: whereat, as one delivered of noxious presences, the Countess rustled into sight. Not noticing Andrew, she lisped to Harriet: 'Misfortunes are sometimes no curses! I bless the catarrh that has confined Silva to his chamber, and saved him from a bestial exhibition.'

The two ladies then swept from the room, and left Andrew to perspire at leisure.

Fresh tribulations awaited him when he sat down to dinner. Andrew liked his dinner to be comfortable, good, and in plenty. This may not seem strange. The fact is stated that I may win for him the warm sympathies of the body of his countrymen. He was greeted by a piece of cold boiled neck of mutton and a solitary dish of steaming potatoes. The blank expanse of table-cloth returned his desolate stare.

'Why, what's the meaning of this?' Andrew brutally exclaimed, as he thumped the table.

The Countess gave a start, and rolled a look as of piteous supplication to spare a lady's nerves, addressed to a ferocious brigand. Harriet answered: 'It means that I will have no butcher's bills.'

'Butcher's bills!' butcher's bills!' echoed Andrew; 'why, you must have butcher's bills; why, confound! why, you'll have a bill for this, won't you, Harry? eh? of course!'

'There will be no more bills dating from yesterday,' said his wife.

'What! this is paid for, then?'

'Yes, Mr. Cogglesby; and so will all household expenses be, while my pocket-money lasts.'

Resting his eyes full on Harriet a minute, Andrew dropped them on the savourless white-rimmed chop, which looked as lonely in his plate as its parent dish on the table. The poor dear creature's pocket-money had paid for it! The thought, mingling with a rush of emotion, made his ideas spin. His imagination surged deliriously. He fancied himself at the Zoological Gardens, exchanging pathetic glances with a melancholy marmoset. Wonderfully like one the chop looked! There was no use in his trying to eat it. He seemed to be fixing his teeth in solid tears. He choked. Twice he took up knife and fork, put them down again, and plucking forth his handkerchief, blew a tremendous trumpet, that sent the Countess's eyes rolling to the ceiling, as if heaven were her sole refuge from such vulgarity.

'Damn that Old Tom!' he shouted at last, and pitched back in his chair.

'Mr. Cogglesby!' and 'In the presence of ladies!' were the admonishing interjections of the sisters, at whom the little man frowned in turns.

'Do you wish us to quit the room, sir?' inquired his wife.

'God bless your soul, you little darling!' he apostrophized that stately person. 'Here, come along with me, Harry. A wife's a wife, I say—hang it! Just outside the room—just a second! or up in a corner will do.'

Mrs. Cogglesby was amazed to see him jump up and run round to her. She was prepared to defend her neck from his caress, and refused to go: but the words, 'Something particular to tell you,' awakened her curiosity, which urged her to compliance. She rose and went with him to the door.

'Well, sir; what is it?'

No doubt he was acting under a momentary weakness he was about to betray the plot and take his chance of forgiveness; but her towering port, her commanding aspect, restored his courage. (There may be a contrary view of the case.) He enclosed her briskly in a connubial hug, and remarked with mad ecstasy: 'What a duck you are, Harry! What a likeness between you and your mother.'

Mrs. Cogglesby disengaged herself imperiously. Had he called her aside for this gratuitous insult? Contrite, he saw his dreadful error.

'Harry! I declare!' was all he was allowed to say. Mrs. Cogglesby marched back to her chair, and recommenced the repast in majestic silence.

Andrew sighed; he attempted to do the same. He stuck his fork in the blanched whiskerage of his marmoset, and exclaimed: 'I can't!'

He was unnoticed.

'You do not object to plain diet?' said Harriet to Louisa.

'Oh, no, in verity!' murmured the Countess. 'However plain it be! Absence of appetite, dearest. You are aware I partook of luncheon at mid-day with the Honourable and Reverend Mr. Duffian. You must not look condemnation at your Louy for that. Luncheon is not conversion!'

Harriet observed that this might be true; but still, to her mind, it was a mistake to be too intimate with dangerous people. 'And besides,' she added, 'Mr. Duffian is no longer "the Reverend." We deprive all renegades of their spiritual titles. His worldly ones let him keep.'

Her superb disdain nettled the Countess.

'Dear Harriet!' she said, with less languor, 'You are utterly and totally and entirely mistaken. I tell you so positively. Renegade! The application of such a word to such a man! Oh! and it is false, Harriet quite! Renegade means one who has gone over to the Turks, my dear. I am almost certain I saw it in Johnson's Dictionary, or an: improvement upon Johnson, by a more learned author. But there is the fact, if Harriet can only bring her—shall I say stiff-necked prejudices to envisage it?'

Harriet granted her sister permission to apply the phrases she stood in need of, without impeaching her intimacy with the most learned among lexicographers.

'And is there no such thing as being too severe?' the Countess resumed.
'What our enemies call unchristian!'

'Mr. Duffian has no cause to complain of us,' said Harriet.

'Nor does he do so, dearest. Calumny may assail him; you may utterly denude him—'

'Adam!' interposed Andrew, distractedly listening. He did not disturb the Countess's flow.

'You may vilify and victimize Mr. Duffian, and strip him of the honours of his birth, but, like the Martyrs, he will still continue the perfect nobleman. Stoned, I assure you that Mr. Duffian would preserve his breeding. In character he is exquisite; a polish to defy misfortune.'

'I suppose his table is good?' said Harriet, almost ruffled by the Countess's lecture.

'Plate,' was remarked in the cold tone of supreme indifference.

'Hem! good wines?' Andrew asked, waking up a little and not wishing to be excluded altogether.

'All is of the very best,' the Countess pursued her eulogy, not looking at him.

'Don't you think you could—eh, Harry?—manage a pint for me, my dear?' Andrew humbly petitioned.
'This cold water—ha! ha! my stomach don't like cold bathing.'

His wretched joke rebounded from the impenetrable armour of the ladies.

'The wine-cellar is locked,' said his wife. 'I have sealed up the key till an inventory can be taken by some agent of the creditors.'

'What creditors?' roared Andrew.

'You can have some of the servants' beer,' Mrs. Cogglesby appended.

Andrew studied her face to see whether she really was not hoisting him with his own petard. Perceiving that she was sincerely acting according to her sense of principle, he fumed, and departed to his privacy, unable to stand it any longer.

Then like a kite the Countess pounced upon his character. Would the Honourable and Reverend Mr. Duffian decline to participate in the sparest provender? Would he be guilty of the discourtesy of leaving table without a bow or an apology, even if reduced to extremest poverty? No, indeed! which showed that, under all circumstances, a gentleman was a gentleman. And, oh! how she pitied her poor Harriet—eternally tied to a most vulgar little man, without the gilding of wealth.

'And a fool in his business to boot, dear!'

'These comparisons do no good,' said Harriet. 'Andrew at least is not a renegade, and never shall be while I live. I will do my duty by him, however poor we are. And now, Louisa, putting my husband out of the question, what are your intentions? I don't understand bankruptcy, but I imagine they can do nothing to wife and children. My little ones must have a roof over their heads; and, besides, there is little Maxwell. You decline to go down to Lymport, of course.'

'Decline!' cried the Countess, melodiously; 'and do not you?'

'As far as I am concerned—yes. But I am not to think of myself.'

The Countess meditated, and said: 'Dear Mr. Duffian has offered me his hospitality. Renegades are not absolutely inhuman. They may be generous. I have no moral doubt that Mr. Duffian would, upon my representation—dare I venture?'

'Sleep in his house! break bread with him!' exclaimed Harriet. 'What do you think I am made of? I would perish—go to the workhouse, rather!'

'I see you trooping there,' said the Countess, intent on the vision.

'And have you accepted his invitation for yourself, Louisa?'

The Countess was never to be daunted by threatening aspects. She gave her affirmative with calmness and a deliberate smile.

'You are going to live with him?'

'Live with him! What expressions! My husband accompanies me.'

Harriet drew up.

'I know nothing, Louisa, that could give me more pain.'

The Countess patted Harriet's knee. 'It succeeds to bankruptcy, assuredly. But would you have me drag Silva to the—the shop, Harriet, love? Alternatives!'

Mrs. Andrew got up and rang the bell to have the remains of their dinner removed. When this was done, she said,

'Louisa, I don't know whether I am justified: you told me to-day I might keep my jewels, trinkets, and lace, and such like. To me, I know they do not belong now: but I will dispose of them to procure you an asylum somewhere—they will fetch, I should think, L400,—to prevent your going to Mr. Duffian.'

No exhibition of great-mindedness which the Countess could perceive, ever found her below it.

'Never, love, never!' she said.

'Then, will you go to Evan?'

'Evan? I hate him!' The olive-hued visage was dark. It brightened as she added, 'At least as much as my religious sentiments permit me to. A boy who has thwarted me at every turn!—disgraced us! Indeed, I find it difficult to pardon you the supposition of such a possibility as your own consent to look on him ever again, Harriet.'

'You have no children,' said Mrs. Andrew.

The Countess mournfully admitted it.

'There lies your danger with Mr. Duffian, Louisa!'

'What! do you doubt my virtue?' asked the Countess.

'Pish! I fear something different. You understand me. Mr. Duffian's moral reputation is none of the best, perhaps.'

'That was before he renegaded,' said the Countess.

Harriet bluntly rejoined: 'You will leave that house a Roman Catholic.'

'Now you have spoken,' said the Countess, pluming. 'Now let me explain myself. My dear, I have fought worldly battles too long and too earnestly. I am rightly punished. I do but quote Herbert Duffian's own words: he is no flatterer though you say he has such soft fingers. I am now engaged in a spiritual contest. He is very wealthy! I have resolved to rescue back to our Church what can benefit the flock of which we form a portion, so exceedingly!'

At this revelation of the Countess's spiritual contest, Mrs. Andrew shook a worldly head.

'You have no chance with men there, Louisa.'

'My Harriet complains of female weakness!'

'Yes. We are strong in our own element, Louisa. Don't be tempted out of it.'

Sublime, the Countess rose:

'Element! am I to be confined to one? What but spiritual solaces could assist me to live, after the degradations I have had heaped on me? I renounce the world. I turn my sight to realms where caste is unknown. I feel no shame there of being a tailor's daughter. You see, I can bring my tongue to name the thing in its actuality. Once, that member would have blistered. Confess to me that, in spite of your children, you are tempted to howl at the idea of Lymport—'

The Countess paused, and like a lady about to fire off a gun, appeared to tighten her nerves, crying out rapidly:

'Shop! Shears! Geese! Cabbage! Snip! Nine to a man!'

Even as the silence after explosions of cannon, that which reigned in the room was deep and dreadful.

'See,' the Countess continued, 'you are horrified you shudder. I name all our titles, and if I wish to be red in my cheeks, I must rouge. It is, in verity, as if my senseless clay were pelted, as we heard of Evan at his first Lymport boys' school. You remember when he told us the story? He lisped a trifle then. "I'm the thon of a thnip." Oh! it was hell-fire to us, then; but now, what do I feel? Why, I avowed it to Herbert Duffian openly, and he said, that the misfortune of dear Papa's birth did not the less enable him to proclaim himself in conduct a nobleman's offspring—'

'Which he never was.' Harriet broke the rhapsody in a monotonous low tone: the Countess was not compelled to hear:

'—and that a large outfitter—one of the very largest, was in reality a merchant, whose daughters have often wedded nobles of the land, and become ancestresses! Now, Harriet, do you see what a truly religious mind can do for us in the way of comfort? Oh! I bow in gratitude to Herbert Duffian. I will not rest till I have led him back to our fold, recovered from his error. He was our own preacher and pastor. He quitted us from conviction. He shall return to us from conviction.'

The Countess quoted texts, which I respect, and will not repeat. She descanted further on spiritualism, and on the balm that it was to tailors and their offspring; to all outcasts from Society.

Overpowered by her, Harriet thus summed up her opinions: 'You were always self-willed, Louisa.'

'Say, full of sacrifice, if you would be just,' added the Countess; 'and the victim of basest ingratitude.'

'Well, you are in a dangerous path, Louisa.'

Harriet had the last word, which usually the Countess was not disposed to accord; but now she knew herself strengthened to do so, and was content to smile pityingly on her sister.

Full upon them in this frame of mind, arrived Caroline's great news from Beckley.

It was then that the Countess's conduct proved a memorable refutation of cynical philosophy: she rejoiced in the good fortune of him who had offended her! Though he was not crushed and annihilated (as he deserved to be) by the wrong he had done, the great-hearted woman pardoned him!

Her first remark was: 'Let him thank me for it or not, I will lose no moment in hastening to load him with my congratulations.'

Pleasantly she joked Andrew, and defended him from Harriet now.

'So we are not all bankrupts, you see, dear brother-in-law.'

Andrew had become so demoralized by his own plot, that in every turn of events he scented a similar piece of human ingenuity. Harriet was angry with his disbelief, or say, the grudging credit he gave to the glorious news. Notwithstanding her calmness, the thoughts of Lymport had sickened her soul, and it was only for the sake of her children, and from a sense of the dishonesty of spending a farthing of the money belonging, as she conceived, to the creditors, that she had consented to go.

'I see your motive, Mr. Cogglesby,' she observed. 'Your measures are disconcerted. I will remain here till my brother gives me shelter.'

'Oh, that'll do,, my love; that's all I want,' said Andrew, sincerely.

'Both of you, fools!' the Countess interjected. 'Know you Evan so little? He will receive us anywhere: his arms are open to his kindred: but to his heart the road is through humiliation, and it is to his heart we seek admittance.'

'What do you mean?' Harriet inquired.

'Just this,' the Countess answered in bold English and her eyes were lively, her figure elastic: 'We must all of us go down to the old shop and shake his hand there—every man Jack of us!—I'm only quoting the sailors, Harriet—and that's the way to win him.'

She snapped her fingers, laughing. Harriet stared at her, and so did Andrew, though for a different reason. She seemed to be transformed. Seeing him inclined to gape, she ran up to him, caught up his chin between her ten fingers, and kissed him on both cheeks, saying:

'You needn't come, if you're too proud, you know, little man!'

And to Harriet's look of disgust, the cause for which she divined with her native rapidity, she said: 'What does it matter? They will talk, but they can't look down on us now. Why, this is my doing!'

She came tripping to her tall sister, to ask plaintively 'Mayn't I be glad?' and bobbed a curtsy.

Harriet desired Andrew to leave them. Flushed and indignant she then faced the Countess.

'So unnecessary!' she began. 'What can excuse your indiscretion, Louisa?'

The Countess smiled to hear her talking to her younger sister once more. She shrugged.

'Oh, if you will keep up the fiction, do. Andrew knows—he isn't an idiot—and to him we can make light of it now. What does anybody's birth matter, who's well off!'

It was impossible for Harriet to take that view. The shop, if not the thing, might still have been concealed from her husband, she thought.

'It mattered to me when I was well off,' she said, sternly.

'Yes; and to me when I was; but we've had a fall and a lesson since that, my dear. Half the aristocracy of England spring from shops!— Shall I measure you?'

Harriet never felt such a desire to inflict a slap upon mortal cheek. She marched away from her in a tiff. On the other hand, Andrew was half fascinated by the Countess's sudden re-assumption of girlhood, and returned—silly fellow! to have another look at her. She had ceased, on reflection, to be altogether so vivacious: her stronger second nature had somewhat resumed its empire: still she was fresh, and could at times be roguishly affectionate and she patted him, and petted him, and made much of him; slightly railed at him for his uxoriousness and domestic subjection, and proffered him her fingers to try the taste of. The truth must be told: Mr. Duflian not being handy, she in her renewed

earthly happiness wanted to see her charms in a woman's natural mirror: namely, the face of man: if of man on his knees, all the better and though a little man is not much of a man, and a sister's husband is, or should be, hardly one at all, still some sort of a reflector he must be. Two or three jests adapted to Andrew's palate achieved his momentary captivation.

He said: 'Gad, I never kissed you in my life, Louy.'

And she, with a flavour of delicate Irish brogue, 'Why don't ye catch opportunity by the tail, then?'

Perfect innocence, I assure you, on both sides.

But mark how stupidity betrays. Andrew failed to understand her, and act on the hint immediately. Had he done so, the affair would have been over without a witness. As it happened, delay permitted Harriet to assist at the ceremony.

'It wasn't your mouth, Louy,' said Andrew.

'Oh, my mouth!—that I keep for, my chosen,' was answered.

'Gad, you make a fellow almost wish—' Andrew's fingers worked over his poll, and then the spectre of righteous wrath flashed on him—naughty little man that he was! He knew himself naughty, for it was the only time since his marriage that he had ever been sorry to see his wife. This is a comedy, and I must not preach lessons of life here: but I am obliged to remark that the husband must be proof, the sister-in-law perfect, where arrangements exist that keep them under one roof. She may be so like his wife! Or, from the knowledge she has of his circumstances, she may talk to him almost as his wife. He may forget that she is not his wife! And then again, the small beginnings, which are in reality the mighty barriers, are so easily slid over. But what is the use of telling this to a pure generation? My constant error is in supposing that I write for the wicked people who begat us.

Note, however, the difference between the woman and the man! Shame confessed Andrew's naughtiness; he sniggered pitiably: whereas the Countess jumped up, and pointing at him, asked her sister what she thought of that. Her next sentence, coolly delivered, related to some millinery matter. If this was not innocence, what is?

Nevertheless, I must here state that the scene related, innocent as it was, and, as one would naturally imagine, of puny consequence, if any, did no less a thing than, subsequently, to precipitate the Protestant Countess de Saldar into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. A little bit of play!

It seems barely just. But if, as I have heard, a lady has trod on a pebble and broken her nose, tremendous results like these warn us to be careful how we walk. As for play, it was never intended that we should play with flesh and blood.

And, oh, be charitable, matrons of Britain! See here, Andrew Cogglesby, who loved his wife as his very soul, and who almost disliked her sister; in ten minutes the latter had set his head spinning! The whole of the day he went about the house meditating frantically on the possibility of his Harriet demanding a divorce.

She was not the sort of woman to do that. But one thing she resolved to do; and it was, to go to Lympport with Louisa, and having once got her out of her dwelling-place, never to allow her to enter it, wherever it might be, in the light of a resident again. Whether anything but the menace of a participation in her conjugal possessions could have despatched her to that hateful place, I doubt. She went: she would not let Andrew be out of her sight. Growing haughtier toward him at every step, she advanced to the strange old shop. EVAN HARRINGTON over the door! There the Countess, having meantime returned to her state of womanhood, shared her shudders. They entered, and passed in to Mrs. Mel, leaving their footman, apparently, in the rear. Evan was not visible. A man in the shop, with a yard measure negligently adorning his shoulders, said that Mr. Harrington was in the habit of quitting the shop at five.

'Deuced good habit, too,' said Andrew.

'Why, sir,' observed another, stepping forward, 'as you truly say—yes. But—ah! Mr. Andrew Cogglesby? Pleasure of meeting you once in Fallow field! Remember Mr. Perkins?—the lawyer, not the maltster. Will you do me the favour to step out with me?'

Andrew followed him into the street.

'Are you aware of our young friend's good fortune?' said Lawyer Perkins. 'Yes. Ah! Well!—Would you believe that any sane person in his condition, now—nonsense apart—could bring his mind wilfully to continue a beggar? No. Um! Well; Mr. Cogglesby, I may tell you that I hold here in my hands a

document by which Mr. Evan Harrington transfers the whole of the property bequeathed to him to Lady Jocelyn, and that I have his orders to execute it instantly, and deliver it over to her ladyship, after the will is settled, probate, and so forth: I presume there will be an arrangement about his father's debts. Now what do you think of that?'

'Think, sir,—think!' cried Andrew, cocking his head at him like an indignant bird, 'I think he's a damned young idiot to do so, and you're a confounded old rascal to help him.'

Leaving Mr. Perkins to digest his judgement, which he had solicited, Andrew bounced back into the shop.

CHAPTER XLV

IN WHICH THE SHOP BECOMES THE CENTRE OF ATTRACTION

Under the first lustre of a May-night, Evan was galloping over the moon-shadowed downs toward Beckley. At the ridge commanding the woods, the park, and the stream, his horse stopped, as if from habit, snorted, and puffed its sides, while he gazed steadily across the long lighted vale. Soon he began to wind down the glaring chalk-track, and reached grass levels. Here he broke into a round pace, till, gaining the first straggling cottages of the village, he knocked the head of his whip against the garden-gate of one, and a man came out, who saluted him, and held the reins.

'Animal does work, sir,' said the man.

Evan gave directions for it to be looked to, and went on to the doorway, where he was met by a young woman. She uttered a respectful greeting, and begged him to enter.

The door closed, he flung himself into a chair, and said:

'Well, Susan, how is the child?'

'Oh! he's always well, Mr. Harrington; he don't know the tricks o' trouble yet.'

'Will Polly be here soon?'

'At a quarter after nine, she said, sir.'

Evan bade her sit down. After examining her features quietly, he said:

'I 'm glad to see you here, Susan. You don't regret that you followed my advice?'

'No, sir; now it's over, I don't. Mother's kind enough, and father doesn't mention anything. She's a-bed with bile—father's out.'

'But what? There's something on your mind.'

'I shall cry, if I begin, Mr. Harrington.'

'See how far you can get without.'

'Oh! Sir, then,' said Susan, on a sharp rise of her bosom, 'it ain't my fault. I wouldn't cause trouble to Mr. Harry, or any friend of yours; but, sir, father have got hold of his letters to me, and he says, there 's a promise in 'em—least, one of 'em; and it's as good as law, he says—he heard it in a public-house; and he's gone over to Fall'field to a law-gentleman there.' Susan was compelled to give way to some sobs. 'It ain't for me—father does it, sir,' she pleaded. 'I tried to stop him, knowing how it'd vex you, Mr. Harrington; but he's heady about points, though a quiet man ordinary; and he says he don't expect—and I know now no gentleman 'd marry such as me—I ain't such a stupid gaper at words as I used to be; but father says it's for the child's sake, and he does it to have him provided for. Please, don't ye be angry with me, sir.'

Susan's half-controlled spasms here got the better of her.

While Evan was awaiting the return of her calmer senses, the latch was lifted, and Polly appeared.

'At it again!' was her sneering comment, after a short survey of her apron-screened sister; and then

she bobbed to Evan.

'It's whimper, whimper, and squeak, squeak, half their lives with some girls. After that they go wondering they can't see to thread a needle! The neighbours, I suppose. I should like to lift the top off some o' their houses. I hope I haven't kept you, sir.'

'No, Polly,' said Evan; 'but you must be charitable, or I shall think you want a lesson yourself. Mr. Raikes tells me you want to see me. What is it? You seem to be correspondents.'

Polly replied: 'Oh, no, Mr. Harrington: only accidental ones—when something particular's to be said. And he dances-like on the paper, so that you can't help laughing. Isn't he a very eccentric gentleman, sir?'

'Very,' said Evan. 'I 've no time to lose, Polly.'

'Here, you must go,' the latter called to her sister. 'Now pack at once, Sue. Do rout out, and do leave off thinking you've got a candle at your eyes, for Goodness' sake!'

Susan was too well accustomed to Polly's usage to complain. She murmured a gentle 'Good night, sir,' and retired. Whereupon Polly exclaimed: 'Bless her poor dear soft heart! It 's us hard ones that get on best in the world. I'm treated better than her, Mr. Harrington, and I know I ain't worth half of her. It goes nigh to make one religious, only to see how exactly like Scripture is the way Beckley treats her, whose only sin is her being so soft as to believe in a man! Oh, dear! Mr. Harrington! I wish I had good news for you.'

In spite of all his self-control, Evan breathed quickly and looked eagerly.

'Speak it out, Polly.'

'Oh, dear! I must, I suppose,' Polly answered. 'Mr. Laxley's become a lord now, Mr. Harrington.'

Evan tasted in his soul the sweets of contrast. 'Well?'

'And my Miss Rose—she—'

'What?'

Moved by the keen hunger of his eyes, Polly hesitated. Her face betrayed a sudden change of mind.

'Wants to see you, sir,' she said, resolutely.

'To see me?'

Evan stood up, so pale that Polly was frightened.

'Where is she? Where can I meet her?'

'Please don't take it so, Mr. Harrington.'

Evan commanded her to tell him what her mistress had said.

Now up to this point Polly had spoken truth. She was positive her mistress did want to see him. Polly, also, with a maiden's tender guile, desired to bring them together for once, though it were for the last time, and for no good on earth. She had been about to confide to him her young mistress's position toward Lord Laxley, when his sharp interrogation stopped her. Shrinking from absolute invention, she remarked that of course she could not exactly remember Miss Rose's words; which seemed indeed too much to expect of her.

'She will see me to-night?' said Evan.

'I don't know about to-night,' Polly replied.

'Go to her instantly. Tell her I am ready. I will be at the West park- gates. This is why you wrote, Polly? Why did you lose time? Don't delay, my good girl! Come!'

Evan had opened the door. He would not allow Polly an instant for expostulation; but drew her out, saying, 'You will attend to the gates yourself. Or come and tell me the day, if she appoints another.'

Polly made a final effort to escape from the pit she was being pushed into.

'Mr. Harrington! it wasn't to tell you this I wrote.'

Miss Rose is engaged, sir.'

'I understand,' said Evan, hoarsely, scarcely feeling it, as is the case with men who are shot through the heart.

Ten minutes later he was on horseback by the Fallow field gates, with the tidings shrieking through his frame. The night was still, and stiller in the pauses of the nightingales. He sat there, neither thinking of them nor reproached in his manhood for the tears that rolled down his cheeks. Presently his horse's ears pricked, and the animal gave a low neigh. Evan's eyes fixed harder on the length of gravel leading to the house. There was no sign, no figure. Out from the smooth grass of the lane a couple of horsemen issued, and came straight to the gates. He heard nothing till one spoke. It was a familiar voice.

'By Jove, Ferdy, here is the fellow, and we've been all the way to Lymport!'

Evan started from his trance.

'It 's you, Harrington?'

'Yes, Harry.'

'Sir!' exclaimed that youth, evidently flushed with wine, 'what the devil do you mean by addressing me by my Christian name?'

Laxley pushed his horse's head in front of Harry. In a manner apparently somewhat improved by his new dignity, he said: 'We have ridden to Lymport to speak to you, sir. Favour me by moving a little ahead of the lodge.'

Evan bowed, and moved beside him a short way down the lane, Harry following.

'The purport of my visit, sir,' Laxley began, 'was to make known to you that Miss Jocelyn has done me the honour to accept me as her husband. I learn from her that during the term of your residence in the house, you contrived to extract from her a promise to which she attaches certain scruples. She pleases to consider herself bound to you till you release her. My object is to demand that you will do so immediately.'

There was no reply.

'Should you refuse to make this reparation for the harm you have done to her and her family,' Laxley pursued, 'I must let you know that there are means of compelling you to it, and that those means will be employed.'

Harry, fuming at these postured sentences, burst out:

'What do you talk to the fellow in that way for? A fellow who makes a fool of my cousin, and then wants to get us to buy off my sister! What's he spying after here? The place is ours till we troop. I tell you there's only one way of dealing with him, and if you don't do it, I will.'

Laxley pulled his reins with a jerk that brought him to the rear.

'Miss Jocelyn has commissioned you to make this demand on me in her name?' said Evan.

'I make it in my own right,' returned—Laxley. 'I demand a prompt reply.'

'My lord, you shall have it. Miss Jocelyn is not bound to me by any engagement. Should she entertain scruples which I may have it in my power to obliterate, I shall not hesitate to do so—but only to her. What has passed between us I hold sacred.'

'Hark at that!' shouted Harry. 'The damned tradesman means money! You ass, Ferdinand! What did we go to Lymport for? Not to bandy words. Here! I've got my own quarrel with you, Harrington. You've been setting that girl's father on me. Can you deny that?'

It was enough for Harry that Evan did not deny it. The calm disdain which he read on Evan's face acted on his fury, and digging his heels into his horse's flanks he rushed full at him and dealt him a sharp flick with his whip. Evan's beast reared.

'Accept my conditions, sir, or afford me satisfaction,' cried Laxley.

'You do me great honour, my lord; but I have told you I cannot,' said

Evan, curbing his horse.

At that moment Rose came among them. Evan raised his hat, as did Laxley. Harry, a little behind the others, performed a laborious mock salute, and then ordered her back to the house. A quick altercation ensued; the end being that Harry managed to give his sister the context of the previous conversation.

'Now go back, Rose,' said Laxley. 'I have particular business with Mr. Harrington.'

'I came to see him,' said Rose, in a clear voice.

Laxley reddened angrily.

'Then tell him at once you want to be rid of him,' her brother called to her.

Rose looked at Evan. Could he not see that she had no word in her soul for him of that kind? Yes: but love is not always to be touched to tenderness even at the sight of love.

'Rose,' he said, 'I hear from Lord Laxley, that you fancy yourself not at liberty; and that you require me to disengage you.'

He paused. Did he expect her to say there that she wished nothing of the sort? Her steadfast eyes spoke as much: but misery is wanton, and will pull all down to it. Even Harry was checked by his tone, and Laxley sat silent. The fact that something more than a tailor was speaking seemed to impress them.

'Since I have to say it, Rose, I hold you in no way bound to me. The presumption is forced upon me. May you have all the happiness I pray God to give you.'

Gentlemen, good night!

He bowed and was gone. How keenly she could have retorted on that false prayer for her happiness! Her limbs were nerveless, her tongue speechless. He had thrown her off—there was no barrier now between herself and Ferdinand. Why did Ferdinand speak to her with that air of gentle authority, bidding her return to the house? She was incapable of seeing, what the young lord acutely felt, that he had stooped very much in helping to bring about such a scene. She had no idea of having trifled with him and her own heart, when she talked feebly of her bondage to another, as one who would be warmer to him were she free. Swiftly she compared the two that loved her, and shivered as if she had been tossed to the embrace of a block of ice.

'You are cold, Rose,' said Laxley, bending to lay his hand on her shoulder.

'Pray, never touch me,' she answered, and walked on hastily to the house.

Entering it, she remembered that Evan had dwelt there. A sense of desolation came over her. She turned to Ferdinand remorsefully, saying: 'Dear Ferdinand!' and allowed herself to be touched and taken close to him. When she reached her bed-room, she had time to reflect that he had kissed her on the lips, and then she fell down and shed such tears as had never been drawn from her before.

Next day she rose with an undivided mind. Belonging henceforth to Ferdinand, it was necessary that she should invest him immediately with transcendent qualities. The absence of character in him rendered this easy. What she had done for Evan, she did for him. But now, as if the Fates had been lying in wait to entrap her and chain her, that they might have her at their mercy, her dreams of Evan's high nature—hitherto dreams only—were to be realized. With the purposeless waywardness of her sex, Pony Wheedle, while dressing her young mistress, and though quite aware that the parting had been spoken, must needs relate her sister's story and Evan's share in it. Rose praised him like one forever aloof from him. Nay, she could secretly congratulate herself on not being deceived. Upon that came a letter from Caroline:

'Do not misjudge my brother. He knew Juliana's love for him and rejected it. You will soon have proofs of his disinterestedness. Then do not forget that he works to support us all. I write this with no hope save to make you just to him. That is the utmost he will ever anticipate.'

It gave no beating of the heart to Rose to hear good of Evan now: but an increased serenity of confidence in the accuracy of her judgement of persons.

The arrival of Lawyer Perkins supplied the key to Caroline's communication. No one was less astonished than Rose at the news that Evan renounced the estate. She smiled at Harry's contrite stupefaction, and her father's incapacity of belief in conduct so singular, caused her to lift her head and look down on her parent.

'Shows he knows nothing of the world, poor young fellow!' said Sir Franks.

'Nothing more clearly,' observed Lady Jocelyn. 'I presume I shall cease to be blamed for having had him here?'

'Upon my honour, he must have the soul of a gentleman!' said the baronet. 'There's nothing he can expect in return, you know!'

'One would think, Papa, you had always been dealing with tradesmen!' remarked Rose, to whom her father now accorded the treatment due to a sensible girl.

Laxley was present at the family consultation. What was his opinion? Rose manifested a slight anxiety to hear it.

'What those sort of fellows do never surprises me,' he said, with a semi-yawn.

Rose felt fire on her cheeks.

'It's only what the young man is bound to do,' said Mrs. Shorne.

'His duty, aunt? I hope we may all do it!' Rose interjected.

'Championing him again?'

Rose quietly turned her face, too sure of her cold appreciation of him to retort. But yesterday night a word from him might have made her his; and here she sat advocating the nobility of his nature with the zeal of a barrister in full swing of practice. Remember, however, that a kiss separates them: and how many millions of leagues that counts for in love, in a pure girl's thought, I leave you to guess.

Now, in what way was Evan to be thanked? how was he to be treated? Sir Franks proposed to go down to him in person, accompanied by Harry. Lady Jocelyn acquiesced. But Rose said to her mother:

'Will not you wound his sensitiveness by going to him there?'

'Possibly,' said her ladyship. 'Shall we write and ask him to come to us?'

'No, Mama. Could we ask him to make a journey to receive our thanks?'

'Not till we have solid ones to offer, perhaps.'

'He will not let us help him, Mama, unless we have all given him our hands.'

'Probably not. There's always a fund of nonsense in those who are capable of great things, I observe. It shall be a family expedition, if you like.'

'What!' exclaimed Mrs. Shorne. 'Do you mean that you intend to allow Rose to make one of the party? Franks! is that your idea?'

Sir Franks looked at his wife.

'What harm?' Lady Jocelyn asked; for Rose's absence of conscious guile in appealing to her reason had subjugated that great faculty.

'Simply a sense of propriety, Emily,' said Mrs. Shorne, with a glance at Ferdinand.

'You have no objection, I suppose!' Lady Jocelyn addressed him.

'Ferdinand will join us,' said Rose.

'Thank you, Rose, I'd rather not,' he replied. 'I thought we had done with the fellow for good last night.'

'Last night?' quoth Lady Jocelyn.

No one spoke. The interrogation was renewed. Was it Rose's swift instinct which directed her the shortest way to gain her point? or that she was glad to announce that her degrading engagement was at an end? She said:

'Ferdinand and Mr. Harrington came to an understanding last night, in my presence.'

That, strange as it struck on their ears, appeared to be quite sufficient to all, albeit the necessity for it was not so very clear. The carriage was ordered forthwith; Lady Jocelyn went to dress; Rose drew Ferdinand away into the garden. Then, with all her powers, she entreated him to join her.

'Thank you, Rose,' he said; 'I have no taste for the genus.'

'For my sake, I beg it, Ferdinand.'

'It's really too much to ask of me, Rose.'

'If you care for me, you will.'

'Pon my honour, quite impossible!'

'You refuse, Ferdinand?'

'My London tailor 'd find me out, and never forgive me.'

This pleasantry stopped her soft looks. Why she wished him to be with her, she could not have said. For a thousand reasons: which implies no distinct one something prophetically pressing in her blood.

CHAPTER XLVI

A LOVERS' PARTING

Now, to suppose oneself the fashioner of such a chain of events as this which brought the whole of the Harrington family in tender unity together once more, would have elated an ordinary mind. But to the Countess de Saldar, it was simply an occasion for reflecting that she had misunderstood—and could most sincerely forgive—Providence. She admitted to herself that it was not entirely her work; for she never would have had their place of meeting to be the Shop. Seeing, however, that her end was gained, she was entitled to the credit of it, and could pardon the means adopted. Her brother lord of Beckley Court, and all of them assembled in the old 193, Main Street, Lymport! What matter for proud humility! Providence had answered her numerous petitions, but in its own way. Stipulating that she must swallow this pill, Providence consented to serve her. She swallowed it with her wonted courage. In half an hour subsequent to her arrival at Lymport, she laid siege to the heart of Old Tom Cogglesby, whom she found installed in the parlour, comfortably sipping at a tumbler of rum-and-water. Old Tom was astonished to meet such an agreeable unpretentious woman, who talked of tailors and lords with equal ease, appeared to comprehend a man's habits instinctively, and could amuse him while she ministered to them.

'Can you cook, ma'am?' asked Old Tom.

'All but that,' said the Countess, with a smile of sweet meaning.

'Ha! then you won't suit me as well as your mother.'

'Take care you do not excite my emulation,' she returned, graciously, albeit disgusted at his tone.

To Harriet, Old Tom had merely nodded. There he sat, in the arm-chair, sucking the liquor, with the glimpse of a sour chuckle on his cheeks. Now and then, during the evening, he rubbed his hands sharply, but spoke little. The unbending Harriet did not conceal her disdain of him. When he ventured to allude to the bankruptcy, she cut him short.

'Pray, excuse me—I am unacquainted with affairs of business—I cannot even understand my husband.'

'Lord bless my soul!' Old Tom exclaimed, rolling his eyes.

Caroline had informed her sisters up-stairs that their mother was ignorant of Evan's change of fortune, and that Evan desired her to continue so for the present. Caroline appeared to be pained by the subject, and was glad when Louisa sounded his mysterious behaviour by saying:

'Evan has a native love of concealment—he must be humoured.'

At the supper, Mr. Raikes made his bow. He was modest and reserved. It was known that this young

gentleman acted as shopman there. With a tenderness for his position worthy of all respect, the Countess spared his feelings by totally ignoring his presence; whereat he, unaccustomed to such great-minded treatment, retired to bed, a hater of his kind. Harriet and Caroline went next. The Countess said she would wait up for Evan, but hearing that his hours of return were about the chimes of matins, she cried exultingly: 'Darling Papa all over!' and departed likewise. Mrs. Mel, when she had mixed Old Tom's third glass, wished the brothers good night, and they were left to exchange what sentiments they thought proper for the occasion. The Countess had certainly, disappointed Old Tom's farce, in a measure; and he expressed himself puzzled by her. 'You ain't the only one,' said his brother. Andrew, with some effort, held his tongue concerning the news of Evan—his fortune and his folly, till he could talk to the youth in person.

All took their seats at the early breakfast next morning.

'Has Evan not come—home yet?' was the Countess's first question.

Mrs. Mel replied, 'No.'

'Do you know where he has gone, dear Mama?'

'He chooses his own way.'

'And you fear that it leads somewhere?' added the Countess.

'I fear that it leads to knocking up the horse he rides.'

'The horse, Mama! He is out on a horse all night! But don't you see, dear old pet! his morals, at least, are safe on horseback.'

'The horse has to be paid for, Louisa,' said her mother, sternly; and then, for she had a lesson to read to the guests of her son, 'Ready money doesn't come by joking. What will the creditors think? If he intends to be honest in earnest, he must give up four-foot mouths.'

'Fourteen-feet, ma'am, you mean,' said Old Tom, counting the heads at table.

'Bravo, Mama!' cried the Countess, and as she was sitting near her mother, she must show how prettily she kissed, by pouting out her playful lips to her parent. 'Do be economical always! And mind! for the sake of the wretched animals, I will intercede for you to be his inspector of stables.'

This, with a glance of intelligence at her sisters.

'Well, Mr. Raikes,' said Andrew, 'you keep good hours, at all events— eh?'

'Up with the lark,' said Old Tom. 'Ha! 'fraid he won't be so early when he gets rid of his present habits—eh?'

'Nec dierum numerum, ut nos, sed noctium computant,' said Mr. Raikes, and both the brothers sniffed like dogs that have put their noses to a hot coal, and the Countess, who was less insensible to the aristocracy of the dead languages than are women generally, gave him the recognition that is occasionally afforded the family tutor.

About the hour of ten Evan arrived. He was subjected to the hottest embrace he had ever yet received from his sister Louisa.

'Darling!' she called him before them all. 'Oh! how I suffer for this ignominy I see you compelled for a moment to endure. But it is but for a moment. They must vacate; and you will soon be out of this horrid hole.'

'Where he just said he was glad to give us a welcome,' muttered Old Tom.

Evan heard him, and laughed. The Countess laughed too.

'No, we will not be impatient. We are poor insignificant people!' she said; and turning to her mother, added: 'And yet I doubt not you think the smallest of our landed gentry equal to great continental seigneurs. I do not say the contrary.'

'You will fill Evan's head with nonsense till you make him knock up a horse a week, and never go to his natural bed,' said Mrs. Mel, angrily. 'Look at him! Is a face like that fit for business?'

'Certainly, certainly not!' said the Countess.

'Well, Mother, the horse is dismissed,—you won't have to complain any more,' said Evan, touching

her hand. 'Another history commences from to-day.'

The Countess watched him admiringly. Such powers of acting she could not have ascribed to him.

'Another history, indeed!' she said. 'By the way, Van, love! was it out of Glamorganshire—were we Tudors, according to Papa? or only Powys chieftains? It's of no moment, but it helps one in conversation.'

'Not half so much as good ale, though!' was Old Tom's comment.

The Countess did not perceive its fitness, till Evan burst into a laugh, and then she said:

'Oh! we shall never be ashamed of the Brewery. Do not fear that, Mr. Cogglesby.'

Old Tom saw his farce reviving, and encouraged the Countess to patronize him. She did so to an extent that called on her Mrs. Mel's reprobation, which was so cutting and pertinent, that Harriet was compelled to defend her sister, remarking that perhaps her mother would soon learn that Louisa was justified in not permitting herself and family to be classed too low. At this Andrew, coming from a private interview with Evan, threw up his hands and eyes as one who foretold astonishment but counselled humility. What with the effort of those who knew a little to imply a great deal; of those who knew all to betray nothing; and of those who were kept in ignorance to strain a fact out of the conflicting innuendos the general mystification waxed apace, and was at its height, when a name struck on Evan's ear that went through his blood like a touch of the torpedo.

He had been called into the parlour to assist at a consultation over the Brewery affairs. Raikes opened the door, and announced, 'Sir Franks and Lady Jocelyn.'

Them he could meet, though it was hard for his pride to pardon their visit to him there. But when his eyes discerned Rose behind them, the passions of his lower nature stood up armed. What could she have come for but to humiliate, or play with him?

A very few words enabled the Countess to guess the cause for this visit. Of course, it was to beg time! But they thanked Evan. For something generous, no doubt.

Sir Franks took him aside, and returning remarked to his wife that she perhaps would have greater influence with him. All this while Rose sat talking to Mrs. Andrew Cogglesby, Mrs. Strike, and Evan's mother. She saw by his face the offence she had committed, and acted on by one of her impulses, said: 'Mama, I think if I were to speak to Mr. Harrington—'

Ere her mother could make light of the suggestion, Old Tom had jumped up, and bowed out his arm.

'Allow me to conduct ye to the drawing room, upstairs, young lady. He'll follow, safe enough!'

Rose had not stipulated for that. Nevertheless, seeing no cloud on her mother's face, or her father's, she gave Old Tom her hand, and awaited a movement from Evan. It was too late to object to it on either side. Old Tom had caught the tide at the right instant. Much as if a grim old genie had planted them together, the lovers found themselves alone.

'Evan, you forgive me?' she began, looking up at him timidly.

'With all my heart, Rose,' he answered, with great cheerfulness.

'No. I know your heart better. Oh, Evan! you must be sure that we respect you too much to wound you. We came to thank you for your generosity. Do you refuse to accept anything from us? How can we take this that you thrust on us, unless in some way—'

'Say no more,' he interposed. 'You see me here. You know me as I am, now.'

'Yes, yes!' the tears stood in her eyes. 'Why did I come, you would ask? That is what you cannot forgive! I see now how useless it was. Evan! why did you betray me?'

'Betray you, Rose?'

'You said that you loved me once.'

She was weeping, and all his spirit melted, and his love cried out: 'I said "till death," and till death it will be, Rose.'

'Then why, why did you betray me, Evan? I know it all. But if you blackened yourself to me, was it not because you loved something better than me? And now you think me false! Which of us two has been false? It 's silly to talk of these things now too late! But be just. I wish that we may be friends. Can we, unless you bend a little?'

The tears streamed down her cheeks, and in her lovely humility he saw the baseness of that pride of his which had hitherto held him up.

'Now that you are in this house where I was born and am to live, can you regret what has come between us, Rose?'

Her lips quivered in pain.

'Can I do anything else but regret it all my life, Evan?'

How was it possible for him to keep his strength?

'Rose!' he spoke with a passion that made her shrink, 'are you bound to this man?' and to the drooping of her eyes, 'No. Impossible, for you do not love him. Break it. Break the engagement you cannot fulfil. Break it and belong to me. It sounds ill for me to say that in such a place. But Rose, I will leave it. I will accept any assistance that your father—that any man will give me. Beloved—noble girl! I see my falseness to you, though I little thought it at the time—fool that I was! Be my help, my guide—as the soul of my body! Be mine!'

'Oh, Evan!' she clasped her hands in terror at the change in him, that was hurrying her she knew not whither, and trembling, held them supplicatingly.

'Yes, Rose: you have taught me what love can be. You cannot marry that man.'

'But, my honour, Evan! No. I do not love him; for I can love but one. He has my pledge. Can I break it?'

The stress on the question choked him, just as his heart sprang to her.

'Can you face the world with me, Rose?'

'Oh, Evan! is there an escape for me? Think Decide!—No—no! there is not. My mother, I know, looks on it so. Why did she trust me to be with you here, but that she thinks me engaged to him, and has such faith in me? Oh, help me!—be my guide. Think whether you would trust me hereafter! I should despise myself.'

Not if you marry him!' said Evan, bitterly. And then thinking as men will think when they look on the figure of a fair girl marching serenely to a sacrifice, the horrors of which they insist that she ought to know: half-hating her for her calmness—adoring her for her innocence: he said: 'It rests with you, Rose. The world will approve you, and if your conscience does, why—farewell, and may heaven be your help.'

She murmured, 'Farewell.'

Did she expect more to be said by him? What did she want or hope for now? And yet a light of hunger grew in her eyes, brighter and brighter, as it were on a wave of yearning.

'Take my hand once,' she faltered.

Her hand and her whole shape he took, and she with closed eyes let him strain her to his breast.

Their swoon was broken by the opening of the door, where Old Tom Cogglesby and Lady Jocelyn appeared.

'Gad! he seems to have got his recompense—eh, my lady?' cried Old Tom. However satisfactorily they might have explained the case, it certainly did seem so.

Lady Jocelyn looked not absolutely displeased. Old Tom was chuckling at her elbow. The two principal actors remained dumb.

'I suppose, if we leave young people to settle a thing, this is how they do it,' her ladyship remarked.

'Gad, and they do it well!' cried Old Tom.

Rose, with a deep blush on her cheeks, stepped from Evan to her mother. Not in effrontery, but earnestly, and as the only way of escaping from the position, she said: 'I have succeeded, Mama. He will take what I offer.'

'And what's that, now?' Old Tom inquired.

Rose turned to Evan. He bent and kissed her hand.

'Call it "recompense" for the nonce,' said Lady Jocelyn. 'Do you still hold to your original proposition, Tom?'

'Every penny, my lady. I like the young fellow, and she's a jolly little lass—if she means it:—she's a woman.'

'True,' said Lady Jocelyn. 'Considering that fact, you will oblige me by keeping the matter quiet.'

'Does she want to try whether the tailor's a gentleman still, my lady- eh?'

'No. I fancy she will have to see whether a certain nobleman may be one.'

The Countess now joined them. Sir Franks had informed her of her brother's last fine performance. After a short, uneasy pause, she said, glancing at Evan:—

'You know his romantic nature. I can assure you he was sincere; and even if you could not accept, at least—'

'But we have accepted, Countess,' said Rose.

'The estate!'

'The estate, Countess. And what is more, to increase the effect of his generosity, he has consented to take a recompense.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed the Countess, directing a stony look at her brother.

'May I presume to ask what recompense?'

Rose shook her head. 'Such a very poor one, Countess! He has no idea of relative value.'

The Countess's great mind was just then running hot on estates, and thousands, or she would not have played goose to them, you may be sure. She believed that Evan had been wheedled by Rose into the acceptance of a small sum of money, in return for his egregious gift.

With an internal groan, the outward aspect of which she had vast difficulty in masking, she said: 'You are right—he has no head. Easily cajoled!'

Old Tom sat down in a chair, and laughed outright. Lady Jocelyn, in pity for the poor lady, who always amused her, thought it time to put an end to the scene.

'I hope your brother will come to us in about a week,' she said. 'May I expect the favour of your company as well?'

The Countess felt her dignity to be far superior as she responded: 'Lady Jocelyn, when next I enjoy the gratification of a visit to your hospitable mansion, I must know that I am not at a disadvantage. I cannot consent to be twice pulled down to my brother's level.'

Evan's heart was too full of its dim young happiness to speak, or care for words. The cold elegance of the Countess's curtsy to Lady Jocelyn: her ladyship's kindly pressure of his hand: Rose's stedfast look into his eyes: Old Tom's smothered exclamation that he was not such a fool as he seemed: all passed dream-like, and when he was left to the fury of the Countess, he did not ask her to spare him, nor did he defend himself. She bade adieu to him and their mutual relationship that very day. But her star had not forsaken her yet. Chancing to peep into the shop, to intrust a commission to Mr. John Raikes, who was there doing penance for his career as a gentleman, she heard Old Tom and Andrew laughing, utterly unlike bankrupts.

'Who 'd have thought the women such fools! and the Countess, too!'

This was Andrew's voice. He chuckled as one emancipated. The Countess had a short interview with him (before she took her departure to join her husband, under the roof of the Honourable Herbert Duffian), and Andrew chuckled no more.

CHAPTER XLVII

A YEAR LATER, THE COUNTESS DE SALDAR DE SANCORVO TO HER SISTER CAROLINE

'Rome. 'Let the post-mark be my reply to your letter received through the Consulate, and most courteously delivered with the Consul's compliments. We shall yet have an ambassador at Rome—mark your Louisa's words. Yes, dearest! I am here, body and spirit! I have at last found a haven, a refuge, and let those who condemn me compare the peace of their spirits with mine. You think that you have quite conquered the dreadfulness of our origin. My love, I smile at you! I know it to be impossible for the Protestant heresy to offer a shade of consolation. Earthly-born, it rather encourages earthly distinctions. It is the sweet sovereign Pontiff alone who gathers all in his arms, not excepting tailors. Here, if they could know it, is their blessed comfort!

'Thank Harriet for her message. She need say nothing. By refusing me her hospitality, when she must have known that the house was as free of creditors as any foreigner under the rank of Count is of soap, she drove me to Mr. Duffian. Oh! how I rejoice at her exceeding unkindness! How warmly I forgive her the unsisterly—to say the least—vindictiveness of her unaccountable conduct! Her sufferings will one day be terrible. Good little Andrew supplies her place to me. Why do you refuse his easily afforded bounty? No one need know of it. I tell you candidly, I take double, and the small good punch of a body is only too delighted. But then, I can be discreet.

'Oh! the gentlemanliness of these infinitely maligned Jesuits! They remind me immensely of Sir Charles Grandison, and those frontispiece pictures to the novels we read when girls—I mean in manners and the ideas they impose—not in dress or length of leg, of course. The same winning softness; the same irresistible ascendancy over the female mind! They require virtue for two, I assure you, and so I told Silva, who laughed.

'But the charms of confession, my dear! I will talk of Evan first. I have totally forgiven him. Attache to the Naples embassy, sounds tol- lol. In such a position I can rejoice to see him, for it permits me to acknowledge him. I am not sure that, spiritually, Rose will be his most fitting helpmate. However, it is done, and I did it, and there is no more to be said. The behaviour of Lord Laxley in refusing to surrender a young lady who declared that her heart was with another, exceeds all I could have supposed. One of the noble peers among his ancestors must have been a pig! Oh! the Roman nobility! Grace, refinement, intrigue, perfect comprehension of your ideas, wishes—the meanest trifles! Here you have every worldly charm, and all crowned by Religion! This is my true delight. I feel at last that whatsoever I do, I cannot go far wrong while I am within hail of my gentle priest. I never could feel so before.

'The idea of Mr. Parsley proposing for the beautiful widow Strike! It was indecent to do so so soon—widowed under such circumstances! But I dare say he was as disinterested as a Protestant curate ever can be. Beauty is a good dowry to bring a poor, lean, worldly curate of your Church, and he knows that. Your bishops and arches are quite susceptible to beautiful petitioners, and we know here how your livings and benefices are dispensed. What do you intend to do? Come to me; come to the bosom of the old and the only true Church, and I engage to marry you to a Roman prince the very next morning or two. That is, if you have no ideas about prosecuting a certain enterprise which I should not abandon. In that case, stay. As Duchess of B., Mr. Duffian says you would be cordially welcome to his Holiness, who may see women. That absurd report is all nonsense. We do not kiss his toe, certainly, but we have privileges equally enviable. Herbert is all charm. I confess he is a little wearisome with his old ruins, and his Dante, the poet. He is quite of my opinion, that Evan will never wash out the trade stain on him until he comes over to the Church of Rome. I adjure you, Caroline, to lay this clearly before our dear brother. In fact, while he continues a Protestant, to me he is a tailor. But here Rose is the impediment. I know her to be just one of those little dogged minds that are incapable of receiving new impressions. Was it not evident in the way she stuck to Evan after I had once brought them together? I am not at all astonished that Mr. Raikes should have married her maid. It is a case of natural selection. But it is amusing to think of him carrying on the old business in 193, and with credit! I suppose his parents are to be pitied; but what better is the creature fit for? Mama displeases me in consenting to act as housekeeper to old Grampus. I do not object to the fact, for it is prospective; but she should have insisted on another place of resort than Fallow field. I do not agree with you in thinking her right in refusing a second marriage. Her age does not shelter her from scandal in your Protestant communities.

'I am every day expecting Harry Jocelyn to turn up.

He was rightly sent away, for to think of the folly Evan put into his empty head! No; he shall have another wife, and Protestantism shall be his forsaken mistress!

'See how your Louy has given up the world and its vanities! You expected me to creep up to you contrite and whimpering? On the contrary, I never felt prouder. And I am not going to live a lazy life, I can assure you. The Church hath need of me! If only for the peace it hath given me on one point, I am eternally bound to serve it.

'Postscript: I am persuaded of this; that it is utterly impossible for a man to be a true gentleman who is not of the true Church. What it is I cannot say; but it is as a convert that I appreciate my husband. Love is made to me, dear, for Catholics are human. The other day it was a question whether a lady or a gentleman should be compromised. It required the grossest fib. The gentleman did not hesitate. And why? His priest was handy. Fancy Lord Laxley in such a case. I shudder. This shows that your religion precludes any possibility of the being the real gentleman, and whatever Evan may think of himself, or Rose think of him, I KNOW THE THING.'

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

A man to be trusted with the keys of anything
Because you loved something better than me
Bitten hard at experience, and know the value of a tooth
From head to foot nothing better than a moan made visible
Glimpse of her whole life in the horrid tomb of his embrace
Gratuitous insult
How many degrees from love gratitude may be
In truth she sighed to feel as he did, above everybody
It 's us hard ones that get on best in the world
It is better for us both, of course
Never intended that we should play with flesh and blood
She was unworthy to be the wife of a tailor
Sincere as far as she knew: as far as one who loves may be
Small beginnings, which are in reality the mighty barriers
Spiritualism, and on the balm that it was
We deprive all renegades of their spiritual titles

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK EVAN HARRINGTON — VOLUME 7 ***

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