

Frank laughed and colored a min I suppose we do, only sometime one tumbles in once too often. I did feel awfully sorry for her, you know; she wasn't even well dressed.' "Yes, I saw that, poor girl, but I

saw that you- Well, go on, old fel-"I am sure she's hard up, Lance, and perhaps can't even get all the materials for her work. Look; here is what she

He put what he had picked up into Darrell's hand. It was a half sheet of paper, dated that morning, and below that an address and letter in an illiterate hand:

" Bloombury, 14 Edward Place. "To Miss Rose Westlake: Miss,-Has the rent is five pounds to-morrow which I can't let it go on no more, be ing only a pore woman, plese to setle it, has i don't want to do nothing un-pleasant; but i am drove, and i rite this as I shan't see you, miss.

From your obediant "SARAH TAYLOR." Lance put the poor scrawl, that was such a pathetic story, back into its Ander's hand, and the two men's eyes met in silence; a few paces further on

'She will never know it, and it seems so hard, when we toss up twenty times that sum—fifty is nowhere. You don't blame me, Lance ?" Blame you! let me go shares, Frank.

Oh," with a touch of humor again, "mustn't I ask that ?" "No, please don't, there's a jewel," said Frank, eagerly. "You won't mind,

will you? You always do understand a fellow so exactly. "All right, my boy," answered Lance. lifting his hand to a hansom, and in they stepped. "I won't cross your wish. Belmont can fetch the package for you, and take it there too if you like, only he looks too exactly what he is—a gentleman's courier—that the 'pore widow,' who doesn't seem hard though,

might be suspicious." "Of course she would. No I'll forward 'La Parisienne' by Carter, Paterson & Co., and stick notes into her hand. As to somehow or other making the acquaintance of Miss Westlake, I

"Or rather make luck," was Lance Darrell's characteristic rejoinder. say, Frankie, boy, who's in a glasshouse of romance too, now, eh? Don't throw stones at mine, for I have got the whip-hand. I'm not smitten with the widow, you know.'

must trust to luck.

"Stop till you see the chicken," re-torted Frank merrily; "then perhaps we can cry quits." The very next day, about five, a letter reached Lance

"Charing Cross Hotel. "Dear Mr. Darrell.-I have called upon Mr. and Mrs. Kynaston, and have received most entirely satisfactory re-I am myself just starting back to Saxleby Chase, and if you can conveniently join us there to-morrow I shall be glad. Please wire train that

a carriage may be sent to the station. "Yours very truly, "ALDYTH MORTIMER." "She's in a desperate hurry," said Frank. "Well, you're in for it now, suppose. Mind you write me a young pamphlet of everything, Lance." 'Honor bright!" returned Lance.

"Bel doesn't like my going off at all

either, but it is too good a lark to be missed. I'll depart in peace to-morrow evening, and get down late." 'You won't go till after we've dined," said Frank, decidedly. "If you reach there by bed-time it must do for them." And in accordance with that wish

CHAPTER V.

"I am only a poor artist, and I have no friends," Rose Westlake had tola the old curio-dealer, and it looked like it as she sat the next day at work in her small, dingily furnished parlor, or rather, trying to bend her attention on her drawing in that hardest of all tasks-the struggle to force the brain to its work when it is worn and weighted by care and anxiety, or overtaxed. (
Here was only the old story, one among the thousands in this vast city; her father had been an artist, clever but idle; a ne'er-do-well, whose relatives had got tired of him years ago, and lost sight of him : he had married. had this one child, and later on lost his wife. He earned well sometimes, and spent it; but one good he did do, he

taught his daughter well, and the next best kindness he did her was to die, or rather, drift out of life some months struggled on fight, too proud nat he had wantuphill what ed her to do on his death-bed-write to her only relative (his sister); but things had got worse and worse in these hard times, when people naturally retrenched first in luxuries; and Rose was only

Poor aching heart, and brain! well might she put down pencil and paper and stare dreamily out of the window. How get five pounds when she had not five shillings in her shabby purse, and nothing left to pawn that would fetch a pound?

a talented girl, not a genius, with thou-

sands as clever and with more "back-

"If I could only fetch up a bit," she said, to herself, desperately, "I could find out this aunt easily through the law list, and ask to call upon her, and ask her to recommend me to pupils: no, never! And poor Mrs. Taylor wanta her money. I reckoned on those pic-ture-dealers so, and they must needs fail! Oh, what shall I do? What can I do but go-and where-where? And that won't pay her. Oh! the grin mockery of old Stedman's offer. I'm miserable—why can't I die? Nobody to care or love me!" she said, getting up in a kind of desperate, despairing way; "I'd be better out of the way! Ah. what is that?"

A big covered cart with "'Carter, Paterson & Co." in large letters on it.
Up it rattled to the door, and out got
two men who began lugging out from
the back a large packing-case which
they got on to the pavement, Rose
watching now with diverted attention. "A mistake!" she muttered, turning away; "nobody here ever has such hig boxes coming—if any at all." A loud, heavy single knock, then Mrs. Taylor's steps in the passage to open

the door, and a man's gruff voice:

"Miss Westlake, mum. She must sign 'ere, please, and we've to carry in this here box, mum."

Rose stood within, hot and cold, white and red alternately, startled, wondering, with that kind of half-fear of anyng unexpected that comes with such hard knocks from the world. Tramp, tramp; the door flung wide,

and in came men, and box and all.

Down went the box carefully. "Sign 'ere, please, miss." Rose signed his book like one in a dream, gave him two-pence, and, as th men departed, looked at Mrs. Taylor in the door-way in a dazed way.
"What can it be—who from?" she

said.
"Lor', miss! I hope it ain't somethink -you know-one ears such queer things, miss!" said the good dame, retreating. "Do you want the chisel

"I have both, thanks. I shall not open it yet, though."
Mrs. Taylor, half curious, half afraid, departed below, and the moment showas gone Rose locked the door and tried to life up the lid, which, however, she found, after cutting the cord and loosening the pack-cloth, was padlocked, and the key attached to a string. With trembling hands she opened the lid, and beheld—silver-paper, and on it a large, well-filled envelope, aldressed in an upright hand, evidently feigned,

"What can it be or mean?" she said, sitting down and now breaking the seal, her cheek flushed with excitement. A white packet! Why not-surelyyes, bank-notes-ten of them, crisp and

'Miss R. Westlake. Please open

new-ten five-pound notes inside a letten in the same hand: 'Please accept from an unknown but most true friend these few notes and the inclosed lay-figure, 'La Parisienne,' whom in accepting you will confer a lasting honor on the donor, who only asks that you will never make inquiry

of madame's late possessor." Rose read this twice-gazed at the notes in a bewildered way, her breath coming fast and chockingly-then she put them in her dress, and, kneeling down, slowly drew aside the silverpaper and muslin.

There before her eyes it rested, the coveted possession-fair-faced, with folded hands, beautiful, mindless, soulless—that lay-figure!

" Mr. Darrell has arrived, ma'am, and I have shown him to his rooms," said the butler at Saxleby Chase, opening the drawing-room door at a quarter to eleven; "but he says he dined at seven,

and does not need supper. Shall I show him in here, ma'am, when he is ready ?" Yes; and bring the wine and biscuits," said Mrs. Mortimer. "After travelling two hours, Mr. Darrell must

need some refreshment. Is Mr. Morti-mer in bed yet, Markham?" 'Yes, ma'am. Evans has come downstairs."

The sedate butler, an old servant of the late "Squire" Guise, retired to bring up the tray ordered, and then to usher the new-comer to the drawing-

A few minutes, and "Mr. Darrell' was announced by Markham.
"Welcome, Mr. Darrell," said Aldyth, meeting the young man with cordially outstretched hand. "I am charged with dless apologies for their absence by

my father and Coralie; but they were

Nay, Mrs. Mortimer, I owe them and you apologies for so late an arrival," answered Lance, smiling; "but the notice being short, you see, I could not well manage to be in more reasonable time." "You owe no apology at all, Mr. Darrell,"

returned the lady, sweetly. Now come into the dining-room and have some supper, despite Markham's Thanks, no; I really want nothing Mrs. Mortimer, nor must I keep you

up longer," Lance added. 'Oh, that is no matter," said she, pleasantly; and if Darrell has been the east bit vain, it might have crossed him that possibly the widow had no bjection-nay, had even arranged-a tete-a-tete with the handsome "secre-tary." "And you must at least take a glass of wine under this roof to-night, or I shall feel that we are wofully in-

He laughed slightly, but accepted the glass of claret she poured out, checking her half-way. "I am but a very small wine-drinker,"," he said, apologetically. "What a pretty place this seems to be, Mrs. Mortimer, as far as one can see by

Yes. I hope you will find it still more so by daylight. We are on the river's bank; so we have that attracion to begin with. After breakfast to-morrow we must show you all over the place. Breakfast any time from half past eight to half past nine, by the way, so you need not be very

"Oh, I am an early bird, Mrs. Mortimer; that is, in the morning, not at And a very light sleeper, I expect," said Aldyth, with a sharp glance.

Yes," he said, quietly, "very light. But now I really must not keep you up onger, Mrs. Mortimer Shall I send Mr. Mortimer's valet to she said, ringing the bell. "Oh, no, thank you. I am quite in-dependent. Good-night, Mrs. Morti-

They shook hands as Markham appeared; but as Lance perfectly remembered the way back to his apartments, the domestic services were not really needed beyond a matter of courtesy. However, the butler preceded him again up the wide shallow stairs, along the corridors all lighted by gas, and comping the door of the antercom to opening the door of the anteroom to the suite asked:

Can I do anything for you, sir?" "Nothing, thank you, Markham. "Good-night, sir."

The butler reported to Evans, the valet, that "this Mr. Darrell was the handsomest, nicest, softest-spoken gentleman" he'd ever seen. swell too; not one bit like them other secataries that was gone; this one's so distingwee!

Meanwhile, Mr. Lance, left alone, stcod for several minutes in a deep meditation, which ended in a slow, significant "Um!" and the mentally spoken rider to his arrival was, "No, Doctor Fell; I stick to my first impressions. And do you really think I don't twig your furtive glances to 'fox' me, ma'am? because I do. You may be a deep one, but I'm deeper still, and you won't get to the bottom of me, sound as you will."

Which was perfectly true. Lance woke up early as usual, look ed at his watch—just on six—and jumped up; he was not going to lie there with the beautiful spring sunshine out-side glistening on the dew diamond that lay on the grass and trees of the gardens near and noble park be-Through all a river, like a stream

of haze. Drew its slow length until 'twas lost in woods.' Still, the first thing, when dresse that he did, was to make a tour of inspection of his suite of apartments

That they were in the front of the old mansion, and therefore faced the south and the river, sun-loving Lance had noticed at once last night.

which again opened the sleeping-chamber similarly appointed; both had doors giving direct on the corridor, but these had curtains within, and could be double locked.

Crossing the anteroom, Darrell entered his new sitting room, and his fastidious eyes were pleased.

It was spacious, light, with two wide, lofty French windows giving on his leave the state of the sta to a balcony draped with creamy lace, held back in crimson bands that matched the prevailing tone of the rich carpet and furniture; but all mellowed by the admixture of white and neutral tints into a sense of beauty

and warmth.

Near the furthest window was a secretaire-table, and a carved book-case well filled with volumes behind its glass doors. On the walls, papered in palest satined French-grey, were a few pictures—all good; and to crown all, there stood in a vantage-place that to which, in truth, the musician's eyes, lighting up, had instantly gone—a little boudoir grand piano in a plain rose-wood case that shone like a polished mirror. Lance crossed to it at once as to an old friend; he knew the mere look of a Broadwood without seeing the name inside the lid he opened, bent lovingly over the white touched them softly to see if the instrument were in perfect tune-yes. nothing was wanting. He closed the lid and turned to the music that lay or the what-not near it. As he expectedall classic; most of it marked either C. G., in a firm small hand, or L. C. G., in a more distinctively masculing But surely some of it was beyond C. G.? he should learn that later, but instrumental and vocal were both

there. Peter's edition of Beethoven's sonatas, a book of Henselt's exquisite Etudes, Mendelssohn's Lieder, several of Chopin's valses, Schuman's taisiestucke, Litoff's edition of Schubert's songs, and several other loose pieces and songs which Lance did not then look over. He threw open a win dow and stepped out into the balcony which, like that of the other windows, he found was on the top of the

large bow windows to the rooms below-the library he afterward discov-Before him spread noble lawns right to the river and beyond the grounds, immediately near, lay the richly wooded park-not a large one, but picturesque. Then Lance looked down on the broad stone terrace that swept the whole south frontage of the house (the great entrance was at the east side)-looked down, I am afraid, with the school-boy intention of somehow

effecting a descent from the balcony just because it was not the proper legitimate way to the gardens. We may be quite sure that if there were an orthodox and an unorthodox

way to do or attain any given end, Madcap Lance would choose the unor thodox. The drop was considerable, even with

his own height and length of arm taken off, if he stepped outside the strong iron railing and lowered him-"The least contretemps would be ex-

ceedingly awkward, being quite strange," said he, pausing, and for once, at any rate, Mr. Lance chose a mode of exit that had a suspicion of He went back to the dressing-room

and fetched thence a fine strong cord, quite a fathom in length. The very thing," said he, return ing to the balcony. He simply passed the cord round one of the iron stanchions of the rail, loosely knotted the two ends, and dropped them outside, so that a double cord hung down about three yards. Descent then was as easy as a stair-

He stepped over the rail, took firm hold of both ropes in his hands, after lewering himself by the stanchion, and came down hand under hand in a minute, the drop thus being reduced to a

"Right you are, Lance," said he, as unconcernedly as if it had been a radpulled the rope down, coiled it and deftly tossed it up into the bal-"you'll tell no tales, sir, before I put you back in your place, added my gentleman, lighting a cigar and strolling off as straight to the water as a young duck would have done.

CHAPTER VII. At the end of the lawn, on the very

brink of the river, Lance Darrell paus ed and glanced along the bank for what could not be far off-the boathouse-but neither way could he see sign of it; only to the right, some few hundred yards off, was a belt of stately trees, some drooping over the stream, and perhaps this little wood hid an inlet. Lance never made two bites at any cherry he had a mind to swallow, so he turned his long, easy stride at once toward the clump of rees, and met with the reward of enterprise, for behind them the bank took a bend, forming the prettiest miniature bay. Here was the boathouse, and near it, along the bankfor the water was deep-a wooden landing-stage fitted with fenders and four or five big iron rings to fasten a boat's painter to. But no boats were out, and, on examination the doors of the boat-house proved to be locked, so he must perforce wait to see what kind of craft lay within: and being practically very philosophical, Lance turned coolly on his heel to retrace his steps into the wide, sunny expanse he had left. It was now rather over half past seven

As he turned he caught sight, be tween the trees, of the flutter of a feminine garment away on the lawn by the bank. Who can it be ?" muttered Darrell,

pausing blankly. "Not that confoundd Doctor Fell at this hour, surely Herrible thought. Impossible. likes indulgence in creature comforts, I'll warrant, and wouldn't turn out so early. It can hardly, either, be the invalid child? I'll see first, before I am seen."

Keeping behind the trees, he stole forward, and pausing again half be-hind a fine elm-tree bent forward, sheltered by the underwood and young

A girl stood on the lawn, not fifty paces off—quite a girl, tall, graceful in every line, slender to fragility, with skin like creamy satin, delicate to transparency as the sun glinted on it and the rich, deep golden masses wavy locks that covered the fine head. The hands, loosely locked before her as she stood, might have served for a sculptor's model; and the form, the face, what an exquisite oval! what perfectly chiseled half-Greek features and magnificent dark eyes! But was it this beauty that made

Lance Darrell give such a sudden, pas-sionate start and hold his very breath, as he gazed with such a strange look in his eyes of almost awe-struck recogni-tion? Great heavens! he had seen her -no, her horrible, haunting only three days ago; that face, the very pose of form and locked hands, only lifeless, soulless—that dreadful,

weird lay-figure!

He stood riveted, spellbound, his own words to Frank ringing in his ears: "I can't shake off a horrible feeling, that, in some way or other, that thing will have some part or lot that thing will have some part or lot in my life." And yet, strangely, just because of that very feeling—just because of this uncanny, mysterious similitude to the lifeless beauty that had so repelled him—the vision of its living embodi-

im—the vision of its living embodi-ment, this breathing, soul-lit beauty, The mind, the music breathing o'er bounding in his veins, even white carresemblance deepened acutely the painful, half-superstitious impression indelibly made on him by the ray-figure. Perhaps, too, memory unconsciously moulded itself through actual vision, and presented to him mentally a closer resemblance of form and features than he would have found if the two, the girl and the figure, had stood side by side.

Lance thought he saw why his two predecessors had been dismissed, and laughed to himself. If Mrs. Mortimer really thought the girl, or chose to think her, the mere child she had implied, he would certainly fool her to the top of her beat and before her the top of her bent, and, before her, treat his charge or patient as much as possible like a child, as if she were quite too much of one for a man of

to think of in any flirtable light. Wicked Lance! He made a detour now, and leaving the trees came straight toward the girl. She looked at the handsome stranger, as he drew near, not with a girl's half-shy gaze, not with the least touch of boldness, but just the straight, frankly searching and innocent look of a defiant yet perforce half-admiring child—the look, too, more of a vexed boy than a girl-child, infinitely witch-

ing despite the not at all pretty frown that contracted the penciled brows.

It was clear, the secretly amused Lance saw, that the bonnie lassie guessed his identity, and meant war-

fare for some reason.
"Good-morning, Miss Guise," he

said, with a slight bow and that sweet, bright smile of his, "if it is Miss Guise I have the pleasure of addressing." 'Yes, I am Coral Guise. I suppose you are this Mr. Darrell?" It was the funniest piece of comedy to see this pretty creature trying to be ungracious, nay, rude. She couldn't be so-she could not help being graceful in manner as in movement; could

not he help the exquisite music voice that robbed the words of the ungraciousness that was not of her nature. "Yes, I am that individual, Lance

Darrell by name, and, like yourself, an early bird in the morning. I hope you are refreshed from your last night's

fatigue ?" She looked at him with an indig-

nant flash in her eyes. Heavens! what glorious eyes they were for an impressionable male being to stand fire from ! "Fatigue?" she repeated, the frown deepening. "I wasn't fatigued!"
"No? Mrs. Mortimer said you had gone to bed because you were tired." "I wasn't tired—it was only eleven!"

said Coral, shortly. "And I was not in bed. I heard Markham showing you to your rooms both times. I chose to go upstairs before you arrived." Lance pulled his silky moustache to

hide the inclination to laugh, but his very quick wits began to see their way-"twig a wrinkle or two," he put "I see," said he, pleasantly, as cool

as a cucumber; "didn't want to show the light of your countenance on the ogre. Well, children are generally as curious as young pups, but you are not, at any rate ' She had flushed crimson at the first

part of his speech, though he could see that a quick sense of humor was touched by his cool audacity; but at the last part, which was a bold stroke to sound what mode of treatment she or grown-up-her approved-child brows relaxed a little.

"I don't know about that, but I did know that a doctor would be botherand looking delicate, and Aldyth backing it-she brought you here, not I, and it is maddening enough to feel in myself not strong and getting tired at everything, without being perpetually hectored—' Do this, don't do that !' I'll do as I like, and not live and move at anybody's bidding

'My dear child," said Lance, imperturbably, "if you choose to turn round and throw yourself into that water. wouldn't drench myself to pick out except by special request. I do assure you; besides, you might drag me under, and I'm not tired of my yet, if you are of yours at half my number of years!"

Her mouth gave, but she stifled the laugh just like an angered, wilful child-or else there was some deeper resentment and animosity against the introduction of controlling cares than he could reach as yet. I wouldn't ask your help," she

said, giving her soft, fluffy wool wrap a fillip that laid her rounded throat bare to the chilly breeze, "I can swim and I'm not half your age-for I'm

Just what he had really given her. "Are you! Oh! well, but that's a mere chicken, after all, isn't it? seems so to me, anyhow !" said Lance, in a positively paternal way, and in a half-absent manner drawing the wrap in a fold across her chest and over her shoulder again with a little caressing, admonitory pat, as if he hadn't in the least noticed her action, but thought the wind had disturbed the scarf. "And as to your not being strong, you mustn't be down-hearted; you will get better as you grow older if you are careful, I dare say. Possibly"—his hand still rested on her shoulder, his eyes covertly watching the beautiful face drooping now a little-" Mrs. Mortimer, in her affectionate anxiety for you, is overcareful, and not being a doctor, mistakes the treatment really most efficacious for you. "Of course she does-they all do and so will you therefore !" said Coral, not looking up. she means it kindly, and I'm an ungrateful wretch not to appreciate it all-but I don't, and won't! I do as I like, all the same, if I lay myself up for it, and mean to—so I give you fair warning! I will not be ordered, or molly coddled up, or treated as if I were "she bit her lip, flushing suddenly and painfully, her bosom heaving, and the words she filled in directly were clearly not those nearly uttered—"were grown up. There have been two before you, and both had to leave after a few months; I couldn't bear them, though Aldyth and Uncle Mortimer liked them. I never wanted any medical resident attendance, and don't now! I-I don't want you either-and don't mean to obey you in anything! Lance Darrell heard this extraordi nary defiance or declaration of hostility without the least outward change, save, perhaps, that his lips settled in-to almost painful determined lines, and his dark eyes still kept their glowing, steadfast gaze unwaveringly on the

The mystery was thickening about him quickly and strangely indeed. Was this fair young creature not quite" a' there"? That flash of terrible thought went as it came—in-stantaneously. Was she trying to give him that idea? and, if so, why? Was it possible that her guardian was trying to drive her, a delicate, sensitive girl, into insanity? Such things had been done time and again. And was she, this Aldyth, seeking till she found some medical man base enough to aid some medical man base enough to aid her? And was this poor child vague-ly suspicious of such a scheme? Like lightning these horrible suspicions flashed upon Darrell's mind, not to be lightly dismissed, but to be watched and considered as time unfolded more. One thing, in the second that he pausand considered as time unfolded more. One thing, in the second that he paused, he grasped firmly. Come what would, he would master this way-ward, strange being's confidence, if nothing more; and if indeed there was any wrong to her brooding, save her, "Don't you think, belle enfant," said Lance, very coolly, and suffering the suspicion of a smile on his lips, "that it will be time enough to hurl defiance when I lay a command?"

just now so passions...
before his. She was completely taken
aback. She had been struggling against
herself, fighting against the power of a
fascination and subtle sympathy, perfascination and subtle sympathy, perhaps all the stronger because not deliberately exerted. The man could no more help it going from him than he could help the rich beauty and loyal soul with which heaven had gifted him. Her reasons for enmity, or for suspicion whatever they were, were plainly shaken, if not removed; an enmity evidently not personal, but either as the agent or representative, as well as executant of an authority and control, she rebelled against, or because she had suspicions of some kind against had suspicions of some kind against Mrs. Mortimer, and therefore against

any nominee of hers to a place in the household. "Come," said Darrell, holding out his hand with a smile, "which is it to be-peace or war?"

She looked into the handsome face searchingly again, wistfully, too, and hesitated, then slowly put her soft hand into his. Ah! what a strong, warm clasp it was that closed upon it

"Oh, how strong you are!" she said.

with a kind of loving envy that moved him deeply in its touching pathos. "What would I not give to be strong! I am tired now, only with standing and being in a passion."
"Pooor little thing!" said Lance, so gently, so pityingly. "Perhaps when I have been here a little while, and you

have learned, as I hope you will, to trust me as a friend—not hold me as a tyrant—I may be able to improve your health by proper treatment." "Oh, if you only could !—if anything ould!" Coral exclaimed, clasping her hands. "But no-it's no use." She broke off suddenly, checking herself

with a change of manner that startled Lance by the confirmation of his grim suspicions of some very ugly mystery. You-you don't know, Mr. Darrell-

and-never mind; I'm only a stupid perverse child-a wayward, spoiled child-not a grown-up young lady at

"H'm, I think I see daylight," thought Darrell; but aloud, with an indulgent smile: "Well, certainly your reception of me was that of a very perverse child, not a young lady of eighteen at all; but I'm a cosmopolitan, you'll find, and take people as I find them. So you

consider that point of warfare may settled peacefully, Miss Guise—or Coral

-which am I to call you?"
"Coral, of course," she said quickly.
"I hate 'Miss Guise,' it's stiff, and hor-"Grown-up," put in Lance, archly. "Yes, particularly for anyone who is to be like one of the family. That's

what Aldyth said of you. Shall we go in now to breakfast?" "With pleasure. Take my arm, my dear child—so; that's a good little girl," said Lance, smiling, as Coralie

clasped her hand on his arm, and as

they moved slowly, leaned on it, he "Oh, how nice!" she said, gratefully. "It is such a support! Mr. Dar-rell, you are a real Christian, to return good for evil; I am a wretch." "You a wretch! Why?" asked Lance, amused, and more deeply en-thralled too, I fear, every moment, as his eyes looked down on the beautiful, remorseful face-child, girl, woman, all in one-to the man's impassioned, chivalrous heart.

'I've been so bad this morning, so wicked to you; and you, in return, let me just lean upon you as if you were a tall, strong oak stick that doesn't eel the weight a bit. Lance laughed outright. "I feel your weight !- such a feath-

er-weight! Why, I could carry such slip of a thing as you from here to and ask where you were at That rich laugh of his was infectious, and for the first time Coral rippled out a girl's sweet, gleeful laugh that did

him good to hear. That's right, little maiden," he said; "nothing so jolly as a good laugh, is there? I'm a rare fellow for that, you know; and I guess you are by nature, mademoiselle. We shall be capital friends, after all, I do believe-you and 'Madcap Lance:' that is the wicked sobriquet I've carried all

Coral gave him another of those frankly open, boy-like looks of hers.
"You do look wicked, too. I am certain you have fully earned your name. By the bye, how did you get out this morning, for the hall door was locked when I went out after you, I know?

You look guilty."
"Do I? Shall I confess to you?" Yes, indeed. Go on quickly." "Well, out of the window of my charming sitting-room, then over the balcony by a short rope." "Oh, what fun!" cried the girl, her eyes sparkling. "I should like that way out. My balconies are just the same. See! those are my rooms, in the same corridor as yours, looking over here."

You would not cut these little transparent hands with the rope," said Lance, with artful nonchalance. "And not being as strong as a man, you might tumble and get hurt." Then you would have to mend me up, 'Doctor Lance Madcap," said she,

You might be hurt past mending,' said Darrell, quietly. A quick glance, then contemptuously "Killed, you mean. Pouf! That little height !" "Captain Speke slipped off two steps, and was killed on the spot," said Lance, dryly, as they reached the ter-

Coral colored up at this home-thrust, and bit her lip, then laughed, a trifle "Never mind; perhaps I won't try just yet—unless you're by."
All right," said Lance. He had little fear for her now, and smiled to himself as he matched that reply with her declaration, "I don't mean to obey you in anything!" And yet already his was the master-

CHAPTER VIII. Coral Guise dropped her companion's arm when they came to the end of the 'The breakfast-room is round here.'

she said; "we can go in by the win-She went in a few steps first and tapped at a large bay window, which was instantly opened; and Lance, following his guide, was warmly greeted by Mrs. Mortimer, all smiles and ur-

'So I see you need no introduction to Coral. Mr. Darrell. You are an early bird indeed, and she—oh, naughty, naughty child!"—shaking her finger—"but we shall reform things now, I hope, sha'n't we, Monsieur le Medein ?"

"I hope so; but," said Lance, smiling, and speaking designedly, "I am sure I don't know yet whether it is to be friend or foe between us."

"Not foe!" cried Aldyth, holding up her hands. "Oh! no, no, not such an ugly word—we've no foes here. What has that spoiled child been doing to give rise to your jest?"

"Oh, nothing, except a war of wit not yet decided," laughed Lance carelessly. "Isn't that so, Miss Guise?"

Coral gave him a defiant look, but somehow he had an impression that it was meant more for Mrs. Mortimer than for him.

Just then, however, the door opened, and a little old gentleman, with perfectly grey hair and a very pleasant face, came in, and advancing as Darrell rose, held out his hand.

Tobe Constanted.)

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