wits? Now that his insane father dead and buried, did he feel it incumb dead and burset, and the family reputation upon him to keep up the family reputation and follow in that father's footsteps?

And the days wore on, and the first of

October came.

The change in the young baronet grew more marked with each day. He lost the power to eat or sleep; far into the night he walked his room, as though some horrible Nemesis were pursuing him.
The second of October came; to-morrow

The hour fixed for the ceremony was eleven o'clock; the place, Chesholm church. The bridesmaids would arrive at ten—the Earl of Wroatmore, the father of the Ladies Gwendoline and Laura Drexel, was to give the bride away. They would return to Powyss Place and eat the sumptuous breakthen off and away to the pretty town

in North Wales. That was the programme. "When to-morrow comes," Edith thinks, as she wanders about the house "will it be carried out?" It chanced that on the bridal eve Miss Darrell was attacked with headache and sore throat. She had lingered heedlessly out in the rain the day before and paid the natural penalty next day. It would never day he hears a say a say. do to be hoarse as a raven on one's wedding day, so Lady Henela insisted on a wet napkin round the throat, a warm bath, gruel, and early bed. Willingly enough the girl obeyed—too glad to have this last evening alone. Immediately after dinner she bade her adieux to her bridegroom-

elect, and went away to her own rooms.

The short October day had long ago darkened down, the curtains were drawn, a fire burned, the candles were lit. She took the bath, the gruel, the wet napkin, and let herself be tucked up in bed. "Romantic," she thought, with a laugh at herself, "for a bride."

Lady Helena—was it a presentiment of what was so near?—lingered by her side long that evening, and at parting, for the first time took her in her arms and kissed

"Good-night, my child," the tender, tremulous tones said. "I pray you make him happy—I pray that he may make you." "I will try," she whispered, "dear, kind Lady Helena—indeed I will try and be a good and faithful wife."

One last kiss. then they parted; the door closed behind her, and Edith was

she lay as usual, high up among the billowy pillows, her hands clasped above her head, her dark, dreaming eyes fixed on the fire. Her maid came in for her last orders; she bade the girl good-night, and told her to go to bed—she wanted nothing more. Then again she was alone. Fatt now a release as little to be understood as her former listless apathy, took hold of her. She could not lie there and sleep; she could not lie there awake. As the clock chimed twelve, she started up in bed in a sudden Twelve. A new day-herwiedding

Impossible to lie there quiet any longer.
She sprang up, locked her door, and began, in her long, white night-robe, pacing up and down. So another hour passed. One!
One from the little Swiss musical clock; one, solemn and sombre, from the big clock one, solemn and sombre, from the big clock up in the tower. Then she stopped—stopped in thought; then she walked to one of her boxes, and took out her writing-case, always kept locked. With a key attached to her neck she opened it, seated herself before a table, and drew forth a package of letters and a picture. The picture was the handsome photographed face of Charley Stuart, the letters he had written her to

slowly through—then the next, and so on to the end. There were over a dozen in all, and tolerably lengthy. As she finished and folded up the last, she took up the picture and gazed at it long and earnestly, with a strangely dark, intent look. How handsome he was! how well he photographed! that was her thought. She had seen him so often, with just this expression, looking at her. What was he doing now? Sleeping calmly, no doubt—she forgotten as she deserved to be. When to-morrow came, would he by any chance remember it was her wedding day, and would the remembrance cost him a pang? She laughed at herself for the sentimental question—Charley Stuart feel a pang for her, or any other business, no doubt, head and ears, soul and and body; absorbed in dollars and cents, and retrieving in some way his fallen for-tunes—Edith Darrell dismissed contemp-tuously, as a cold-blooded jilt, from his memory. With a steady hand she tied up the letters and replaced them in the desk. The picture followed. "Good-by, Charley," she said, with a sort of smile. She could no more have destroyed those souvenirs of the past than she could have cut off her right hand. Wrong, you say, and shake your head. Wrong, of course; but when has Edith Darrell done right—when have I pictured her to you in any very favorable light? As long as she lived, and was Sir Victor's wife, she would never look at them again, but destroy them-no, she could not

Six! As she closed and locked the writing case the hour struck; a broad, bright sunburst flashed in and filled the room with yellow glory. The sun had risen cloudless and brilliant at last on her wedding day.

CHAPTER XVL

She replaced the chest in thestaunk, and walking to the window, drew back the curwalking to the window, drew back the curtain and looked out. Over emerald lawn and coppice, tall trees and brilliant flowers, the October sun shone gloriously. No fairer day ever smiled upon old earth. She could hear the household astir already—she could even see Sir Victor, away in the discoulded with the second of the se tance, taking his morning walk. How singularly haggard and wan he looked, like anything you please except a happy bridegroom about to marry the lady he loves above all on earth.

respite was ended, her solitude invaded at last. There was a tap at the door, and Lady Helena, followed by Miss Darrell's

Had they all kept vigil? Her ladyship in the pitiless, searching glare of the morning sun, certainly looked much more like it than the quiet bride. She was pale, nervous, agitated beyond anything the girl had

ever seen.

"How had Edith slept? How was her cold? How did she feel?"

"Never better," Miss Darrell responded smilingly. "The sore throat and headache are quite gone, and I am ready to do justice to the nice breakfast which I see Emily has

She sat down to it—chocolate, rolls, an omelette, and a savory little bird, with excellent and unromantic appetite. Then the service was cleared away, and the real business of the day began. She was under the hands of her maid, deep in the mysteries of the wedding-toilette.

At ten came the bridemaids, a brilliant

evy, in sweeping trains, walking visions of ik, tulle, laces, pertume, and flowers. A lif-past ten Miss Darrell, "queen rose in rose-bud garden of girls," stood in their

She looked beautiful. It is an understooning that all brides, whatever their ap ning that all brides, whatever their appearance on the ordinary occasions of life ook beautiful on this day of days. Edith Darrell had never looked so stately, so queenly, so handsome in her life. Just a hought pale, but not unbecomingly sone rich, glistening white silk sweeping far behind her, set off well the fine figure, which it fitted without flaw. The dark, around face shone like a star from the misty which it fitted without flaw. The dark, proud face shone like a star from the misty folds of the bridal veil; the lengendary orange blossoms crowned the rich, dark nair; on neck, ears, and arms glimmered a priceless parure of pearls, the gift, like the dress and veil, of Lady Helena. A fragrant bouquet of spotless white had been sent up by the bridegroom. At a quarter of eleven she entered the carriage and was driven away to the church. All the way from the carriage to the stone porch the

from the carriage to the stone porch the charity children strewed her path with flowers, and sang (out of tune) a bridal anthem. She smiled down upon their vulgar, admiring little faces as she went by on gar, admiring little faces as she went by on the Earl of Wroatmore's arm. The church was filled. Was seeing her married worth all this trouble to those good people, she wondered, as she walked up the aisle, still on the arm of the Right Honorable, the

There was, of course, a large throng of invited guests. Lady Helena was there in pale, flowing silks, the bridesmaids, a billowy crowd of white-plumaged birds, and the bridegroom, with a face whiter than the white waistcoat, standing waiting for his bride. And there, in surplice, book in hand, stood the rector of Chesholm and his curate, ready to tie the untieable knot.

A low, hushed murmur ran through the

church at sight of the silver-shining figure how perfectly self-possessed and calm. Truly, if beauty and high-bred repose of manner be any palliation of low birth and obscurity, this American young lady had it.

An instant passes—she is kneeling by Sir Victor Catheron's side. "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" say the urbane tones of the rector of Chesholm, and the Right Honorable the Earl of Wroatmore comes forward on two rickety old legs and gives her. "If any one here present knows any just cause or impediment why this man should not be married to this woman, I charge him," etc., but no one knows. The solemn words go on. "Wilt thou take Edith Darrell to be thy wedded wife?" "I will," Sir Victor Catheron responds, but in broken, inarticulate tones. It is the bride's

"I will!" the clear, firm voice is perectly audible in the almost painfully tense stillness. The ring slips over her finger; she watches it curiously. "I pronounce ye man and wife," says the rector. "What God hath joined together, let no man put It is all over; she is Lady Catheron, and

nothing has happened.

They enter the vestry, they sign their names in the register, their friends flock round to shake hands, and kiss, and congratulate. And Edith smiles through it all, and Sir Victor keeps that white, haggard, unsmiling face. It is a curious fancy, but if it were not so utterly abourd. Edith but, if it were not so utterly absurd, Edith would think that he looked at her as though he were afraid of her.

On her husband's arm-her husband'sshe walks down the aisle and out of the church. They enter the carriages, and are driven back to Powyss Place. They sit down to breakfast—every face looks happy and bright, except the face that should look the happiest and brightest of all—the bridegrooms. He seems to make a great effort to be cheerful and at ease; it is a failure. He tries to return thanks in a speech; it is a greater failure still. An the party. What is the matter.
Victor? All eyes are fixed curiously upon What is the matter with Sir him. Surely not repenting his mesalliance so speedily. It is a relief to everybody when the breakfast ends, and the bride goes

upstairs to change her dress. The young baronet had engaged a special train to take them to Wales. The newmade Lady Catheron changes her shining bribal robes for a charming travelling cos tume of palest gray, with a gossamer veil of the same shade. She looks as handsome in it as in the other, and her cool calm is a marvel to all beholders. She shakes hands gayly with their friends and guests; a smile is on her face as she takes her bridegroom's arm and enters the waiting carriage. Old shoes in a shower are flung after them; ladies wave their handkerchiefs, gentlemen call good-by. She leans forward and waves her gray-gloved hand in return — the cloudless smile on the beautiful face to the last. So they see her—as not one of all who stand there will ever see her on earth

The house, the wedding guests are out of sight—the carriage rolls through the gates of Powyss Place. She falls back and looks They are flying along Chesholm high street; the tenantry shout lustily; the joy-bells still clash forth. Now they are at the station—ten minutes more, and, as fast as steam can convey them, they are whirling into Wales. And all this time bride and pridegroom have not exchanged a word!

That curious fancy of Edith's has come back—surely Sir Victor is afraid of her. How strangely he looks—how strangely he keeps aloof—how strangely he is silent now fixedly he gazes out of the railway carriage window—anywhere but at her! Has his brain turned? she wonders; is Sir

Victor going mad? She makes no attempt to arouse him let him be silent if he will; she rather prefers it, indeed. She sits and looks sociably out of the opposite window at the bright, flying landscape, steeped in the amber glitter of the October afternoon sun.

They reach Wales. The sun is setting redly over mountains and sea. The carriage is awaiting them; she enters, and lies back wearily with closed eyes. She is dead tired and depressed; she is beginning to feel the want of last night's sleep, and in a weary way is glad when the Carnaryon. in a weary way is glad when the Carnarvon cottage is reached. Sir Victor's man, my lady's maid, and two Welsh servants came forth to meet them; and on Sir Victor's arm she enters the house.

She goes at once to her dressing-room. rest, to bathe her face, and remove her wraps, performing those duties herself, and dismissing her maid. As she and Sir Victor separate, he mutters some half-incoherentwords—he will take a walk and smoke a cigar before dinner, while she is resting. He is gone even while he says it, and she is

She removes her gloves, hat, and jacket, bathes her face, and descends to the little She removes her gloves, hat, and jacket, bathes her face, and descends to the little cottage drawing-room. It is quite deserted —sleepy silence everywhere reigns. She throws herself into an easy-chair beside the open window, and looks listlessly out. Ruby, and purple, and golden, the sun is setting in a radiant sky—the yellow sea creeps up on silver sands—old Carnarvon Castle gleams and glows in the rainbow light like a fairy palace. It is unutterably beautiful, unutterably drowsy and duil. And, while she thinks it, her heavy eyelids sway and fall, her head sinks back, and Edith falls fast asleep.

Fast asleep; and a mile away. Sir Victor Catheron paces up and down a strip of tawny sand, the sea lapping softly at his feet, the birds singing in the branches, not a human soul far or near. He is not smoking that before-dinner cigar—he is striding up and down more like an escaped Beilamite than anything else. His hat is drawn over his eyes, his brows are knit, his lips set tight, his hands are clenched. Present-

ne pauses, leans against a tree, and oks, with eyes full of some haggard, horde despair, out over the red light on sea is sky. And, as he looks, he falls down idenly as though some inspiration had idenly, as though some inspiration had ted him, upon his knees, and lifts his asped hands to that radiant sky. A pray-

that seems frenzied in its agonized in-nsity, bursts from his lips—the sleeping the twittering birds, the rustling ves, and He who has made them, alone to hear. Then he falls forward on his

is he mad? Surely no sane man ever is he mad? Surely no sane man ever ed, or looked, or spoke like this. He so—prostrate, motionless—for upward an hour, then slowly and heavily he rises. Is face is calmer now; it is the face of a who has fought some desperate fight, and gained some desperate victory—one of ose victories more cruel than death.

He turns and goes hence. He crashes rough the tall, dewy grass, his white face t in a look of iron resolution. He is astly beyond all telling; dead and in his ifin he will hardly look more death-like. in he will hardly look more death-like.

The reaches the cottage, and the first sight son which his eyes rest is his bride, peacedly asleep in the chair by the still open indow. She looks lovely in her slumber, and peaceful as a little child—no very rrible sight surely. But as his eyes fall son her, he recoils in some great horror, a man may who has received a blinding

"Asleep!" his pale lips whisper ; "asleep He stands spell-bound for a momenten he breaks away headlong. He makes s way to the dining-room. The table, all ight with damask, silver, crystal, and cut vers, stands spread for dinner. He takes

and, still standing, writes rapidly down one page. Without reading, he holds and seals the sheet, and slowly and with dragging steps returns to the room where Edith sleeps. On the threshold he lingers—he seems afraid—afraid to approach. But he seems afraid—afraid to approach. But he does approach at last. He places the note he has written on a table, he draws near haggard eyes burn on her face, their mes-meric light disturbs her. She murmurs and moves restlessly in her sleep. In an instant he is on his feet; in another, he is out of the room and the house; in another, the deepening twilight takes him, and he is

A train an hour later passes through Carnarvon on its way to London. One passenger alone awaits it at the station—one passenger who enters an empty first-class compartment and disappears. Then it goes shricking on its way, bearing with it to London the bridegroom, Sir Victor

CHAPTER XIX

The last red ray of sunset had faded, and silver stars were out, the yellow moon shone serenely over land and sea, before Edith awoke—awoke with a smile on her

lips from a dream of Charley.

"Do go away—don't tease," she was murmuring half smilingly, half petulantly—the words she had spoken to him a hundred times. She was back in Sandypoint, he heside her living over the old day. he beside her, living over the old days, gone forever. She awoke to see the tawn moonshine streaming in, to hear the soft whispers of the night wind, the soft, sleepy lap of the sea on the sands, and to realize, with a shrill and a shock, she was Sir Victor Catheron's wife. But where was he

She looked round the room, half in shadow, half in brilliant moonlight. No, he was not there. Had he returned from his stroll? She took out her watch. A quarter of seven—of course he had. She sat down and rang the bell. Jamison, the confidential servant, appeared.
"Has Sir Victor returned from his walk,

Jamison? Is he in the dining-room? Mr. Jemison's well-bred eyes looked astonishment at the speaker, then around the room. Mr. Jamison's wooden countenance looked stolid surprise Sir Victor-my lady-I thought Sir Vic

tor was here, my lady."
"Sir Victor has not been here since half an hour after our arrival. He went out for a walk, as you very well know. I ask you if he has returned.'

"Sir Victor returned more than an ago, my lady. I saw him myself. You were asleep, my lady, by the window as he came up. He went into the dining-room and wrote a letter; I saw it in his hand. And then, my lady, he came in here."

The man paused, and again peered around the room. Edith listened in grow-

I thought he was here still, my lady, so did Hemily, or we would have taken the iberty of hentering and closing the window. We was sure he was here. He sut-tingly hentered with the letter in his 'and.

Again there was a pause. Again Mr. "If your ladyship will hallow, I will light the candles here, and then go and hascer-tain whether Sir Victor is in hany of the

hother rooms.' She made an affirmative gesture, and returned to the window. The man lit the candles: a second after an exclamation

"The note, my lady! Here it is."

It lay upon the table; she walked over and took it up. In Sir Victor's hand, and addressed to herself! What did this mean? She stood looking at it a moment—then she turned to Jamison.
"That will do," she said briefly; "if

want you I will ring."

The man bowed and left the room. stood still, holding the unopened note, strangely reluctant to break the seal. With an effort she aroused herself at last, and tore it open. This was what she read Heaven's sake, pardon me. We shall never meet more! O beloved! believe that I love you, believe that I never loved you half so I loved you less I might dare to stay. But I dare not. I can tell you no more—a promise to the living and the dead binds A dreadful secret of sin, and shame and guilt, is involved. Go to Lady Helena. My love—my bride—my heart is breaking as I write the word—the cruel word that must be written-farewell. I have but one prayer in my heart—but one wish in my soul—that my life may be a short one.

No more. So, in short, incoherent, disconnected sentences, this incomprehensible letter began and ended. She stood stunned, bewildered, dazed, holding it, gazing at it blankly. Was she asleep? Was this a dream? Was Sir Victor playing some ghastly kind of practical joke, or—had Sir Victor all of a sudden gone wholly and en-

tirely mad? She shrank from the last thought — but the dim possibility that it might be true calmed her. She sat down, hardly know-ing what she was doing, and read the letter again, Yes, surely, surely she was right. Sir Victor had gone mad!

Sir Victor had gone mad!

Her thoughts went back over the past two weeks—to the change in him ever since his father's death. There had been times when he shrunk from her, when he had seemed absolutely afraid of her. She had doubted it then—she knew it now. It was the dawning of his insanity — the family taint breaking forth. Again, and still again, she read the letter. Very strangely sne looked, the waxlights flickering on her pale, rigid young face, her compressed lips set in one tight line—on her soft pearl gray silk, with its point-lace collar, and diamond star. A bride, alone, forsaken, on her wedding, day.

tice pursuing her for having bartered herself for rank? And yet girls as good and better than she, did it every day. Sne rose and began pacing up and down the floor. What should she do? "Go back to Lady Helena," said the letter. Go back! cast off, deserted—she, who only at noon to-day had left them a radiant bride! As she thought it, a feeling of absolute hatred for the man she had married came into her eart. Sane or mad she would hate him

her room. There was resolute blood in the girls's veins; she walked over to the bell rang it, her head erect, her eyes bright only her lips still set in that tight, unpleasant line.

Mr. Jamison, grave and respectful, his burning curiosity diplomatically hidden, answered. "Jamison," the young lady said, her tones clear and calm, looking the man straight in the eyes, "your master has been obliged to leave Wales suddenly, and

will not return. You may spend the night in packing up. To-morrow by the earliest train, I return to Cheshire." "I have come to you," Edith went on, "to tell you the truth. I don't, ask what his secret is that he speaks of; I don't wish to know. I think he should be looked after. If he is insane he should not be "Yes, me lady."
Not a muscle of Jamison's face moved-

not a vestige of surprise or any other earth-y emotion was visible in his smooth-shaves allowed to go at large." "If he is insane!" Lady Helena cried, looking up again, angrily. "You do well to say if. He is no mere insane than you "Is dinner served?" his young mistress asked, looking at her watch. "If not, serve immediately. I shall be there in two

She kept her word. With that light in her eyes, that pale composure in her face, she swept into the dining-room, and took her place at the glittering table. Jamison waited upon her—watching her, as a cat

"She took her soup and fish, her slice of pheasant and jelly, I do assure you, just the same as hever, Hemily," he related to the lady's maid; "but her face was whiter than the tablecloth, and her eyes had a look in them I'd rather master wo face than me. She's one of the 'ighstep ping sort, depend upon it, and quiet as she takes it now, there'll be the deuce and all to pay one of these days."

She rose at last and went back to the drawing-room. She stood by the window long, looking out. No thought of sympathy tor him—of trying to find him out on the morrow—entered her mind. He had deserted her; sane or mad, that was enough

What a lovely night it was! What were they doing at home? What was Trixy about just now? What was—Charley? She had made up her mind never to think of Charley more. His face rose vividly before her now in the moonrays, pale, stern, contemptuous. "Oh!" she passionately thought, "how he must scorn, how he must

face fell upon them. One hour, two, three passed; she never moved. She was not crying, she was suffering, but dully, with a numb, torpid, miserable sense of pain. All her life since that rainy spring day, when Charley Stuart had come to point with his mother's letter, returned to her. She had striven and coquetted to bring about the result she wanted—it had seemed such a dazzling thing to be a baro-net's wife, with an income that would flow in to her like a ceaseless golden river. She had jilted the man she loved in cold blood, and accepted the man to whom her heart was as stone. In the hour when fortune was deserting her best friends, she had de-serted them too. And the end was—this. It was close upon twelve when Emily, the maid, sleepy and cross, tapped at the door.

"I shall not want you to-night," Edith said briefly. "You may go to bed." "But you are ill, my lady. If you only saw yourself! Can't I fetch you something? A glass of wine from the drawing.

"Nothing, Emily, thank you. I have sat up too long in the night air—that is all. Go to bed; I shall do very well." Left alone, she closed and fastened the

window herself. An unsupportable sense of pain and weariness oppressed her. She did not undress. She loosened her clothes, wrapped a heavy, soft railway rug about her, and lay down upon the bed. In five minutes the tired eyes had closed. There is no sooner narcotic than trouble tometimes; hers was forgotten-deeply, dreamlessly, she slept until morning.

The sun was high in the sky when she awoke. She raised herself upon her elbew and looked around, bewildered. In a second yesterday flashed upon her, and her journey of 40 day. She arose, made her morning toilet, and rang for her maid. Breakfast was waiting—it was past nine o'clock, and she could leave Carnavon in three quarters of an hour. She made an effort to eat and drink; but it was little better than an effort. She gave Jamison his parting instructions—he was to remain here until to morrow; by that time orders would come from Powyss Place. Then, in the dress she had travelled in yesterday, she entered the railway carriage and started

vpon her return journey. It was about three in the afternoon when the fly from the railway drove up to the state-ly portion entrance of Powyss Place. She paid and dismissed the man, and knocked unthinkingly. The servant who opened the door fell back, staring at her, as though she had been a ghost.
"Is Lady Helena at home?"

Lady Helena was at home-and still the man stared blankly as he made the reply.

man stared blankly as he made the reply. She swept past him, and made her way, unannounced, to her ladyship's private room. She tapped at the door.

''Come in,'' said the familiar voice, and she obeyed. Then a startling cry rang out. Lady Helena rose and stood spellbound, gazing in mute consternation at the pale girl before her. "Edith!" she could just gasp.

is this? Where is Victor? Edith came in, closed the quietly faced her ladyship. "I have not the faintest idea where Sir Victor Catheron may be at the present moment. Wherever he is, it is to be hoped he is able to take care of himself. I know I have not seen him since four

The lips of Lady Helena moved, but no sound came from them. Some great and nameless terror seemed to have fallen upon

the clear, steady tones of the bride went on, "but being very tired after the jour-ney, I fell asleep in the cottage parlor at Carnarvon, half an hour after our arrival. Sir Victor had left me to take a walk and a smoke, he said. It was nearly seven when I awoke. I was still alone. Your nephew "Gone !"

Lady Helena, and you will see that in re-turning here, I am only obeying my lord and master's command."

She took the note from her pocket, and presented it. Her ladyship took it, read it, her face growing a dreadful ashen gray. "So soon!" she said, in a sort of whis-per; "that it should have fallen upon him so soon! Oh! I feared it! I feared it! I

the son's It has lain dormant for three-and-twenty years, to break out on his wed-ding-day. Lady Helena, am I right?"

But Lady Helena was sobbing convul-sively now. Her sobs were her only reply.

"It is hard on you," Edith said, with a dreamy sort of pity. "You loved him."

"And you did not," the elder woman re-torted, looking up. You loved your cousin, and you married my poor, unhappy boy for his title and his wealth. It would have been better for him he had died than ever set eyes on your face."

"Much better," Edith answered steadily.
"Better for him—better for me. You are right, Lady Helena Powyss, I loved my cousin, and I married your nephew for his title and his wealth. I deserve all you can say of me. The worst will not be half bad enough."

enough."
Her ladyship's face drooped again; her suppressed sobbing was the only sound to be heard.

Edith stood still looking at her. The last trace of color faded from her face. "Not insane," she whispered, as if to herself; "not insane, and—he deserts me!"
"Oh, what have I said!" Lady Helena cried; forgive me, Edith—I don't know what I am saying—I don't know what to think. Leave me alone, and let me try to understand it, if I can. Your old rooms are ready for you. You have come to re-main with me, of course."

"For the present—yes. Of the future I have not yet thought. I will leave you alone, Lady Helena, as you desire. I will not trouble you again until to-morrow." She was quitting the room. Lady Helena arose and took her in her arms, her face all blotted with a rain of tears.

"My child ! my child !" she said, "it hard on you—so young, so pretty, and only married yesterday! Edith, you frighten me! What are you made of? You look like a stone !" The girl sighed—a long, weary, heart

sick sigh.
"I feel like a stone. I can't cry. think I have no heart, no soul, no feeling, no conscience—that I am scarcely a human being. I am a hardened, callous wretch, for whom any fate is too good. Don't pity me, dear Lady Helena; don't waste one tear on me. I am not worth it."

She touched her lips to the wet chee and went slowly on her way. No heartdead. She seemed to herself to be a cen tury old, as she toiled on to her familian rooms. They met no more that day—each kept to her own apartments. It was long after dark when there cam

a ring at the bell, and the footman, opening the door, saw the figure of a man muffled and disguised in slouch hat and greatcoat. He held an umbrella over his head, and a scarf was twisted about the lower part of his face. In a husky voice, stifled in his scarf, he asked for Lady Helena. "Her ladyship's at home," the f otman answered, rather superciliously, "but she don't see strangers at this hour."

"Give her this," the stranger said; "she In spite of hat, scarf, and umbrella, there was something familiar in the air of the visitor, something familiar in his tone. The man took the note suspiciously and passed it to another, who passed it to her ladyship's maid. The maid passed it to

her ladyship, and her ladyship read it with a suppressed cry. "Show him into the library at once. will go down.

The muffled man was shown in, still wearing hat and scarf. The library was but dimly lit. He stood like a dark shadow amid the other shadows. An instant later the door opened and Lady Helena, pale and wild, appeared on the threshold. "It is," she faltered, "it is-you!"

She approached slowly, her terrified eyes riveted on the hidden face. "It is I. Lock the door.

She obeyed, she came nearer. He drew away the scarf, lifted the hat, and showed her the face of Sir Victor Catheron.

CHAPTER XX.

—dawned in wild wind and driving rain still—dawned upon Edith, deserted more strangely than surely bride was ever de-

She had darkened her chamber; she had forced herself resolutely to sleep. But the small hours had come before she had suceeded, and it was close upon ten when the dark eyes opened from dreamland to life. Lady Helena, very pale, very tremulous, very frightened, and helpless-looking, awaited her. A large, red fire burned on the hearth. Her ladyship was wrapped in a fluffy white shawl, but she shivered in the state of the line that touched spite of both. The lips that touched Edith's cheek were almost as cold as that cold cheek itself. Tears started to her

eyes as she spoke to her. "My child," she said, "how white yo are: how cold and ill you look. I am afraid you did not sleep at all." "Yes, I slept," answered Edith; "for a few hours, at least. The weather has some-thing to do with it, perhaps; I always fall

a prey to the horrors in wet and windy weather." Then they sat down to the fragrant and Then they sat down to the fragrant and tempting breakfast, and ate with what appetite they might. For Edith, she hardly made a pretence of eating—she drank a large cup of strong coffee, and arose.

"Lady Helena," she began abruptly, "as We take orders for anything in the woollen line and guaran-

I came out of my room, two of the servants were whispering in the corridor. I merely caught a word or two in passing. They stopped immediately on seeing me. But from that word or two, I infer this—Sir Victor Catheron was here to see you last

Lady Helena was trifling nervously with her spoon—it fell with a clash now into her cup, and her terrified eyes looked pitiously at her companion. "If you desire to keep this a secret to," Edith said, her lips curling scornfully, "of course you are at liberty to do so-of

presume to ask no questions. But if not, I would like to know-it may in some measure influence my own "What do you intend to do?" her lady-ship brokenly asked.
"That you shall hear presently. Just

now the question is: Was your nephew here last night or not?" "He was."
She said it with a sort of sob, hiding her face in her hands. "May Heaven help me," she cried; "it is growing more than I can bear. O my child, what can I say to you? how can I comfort you in this great trouble that has come upon you?"

"You are very good, but I would rather not be comforted. I have been utterly base and mercenary from first to last—a wretch who has richly earned her fate. Whatever has befallen me I deserve. I married your nephew without one spark

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