wished to talk to me. The knowledge that I loved him with a full and perteet tore that was to be my one secret in life wave me, atrange to say, porthat case in his presence, purfect confictions with with him so we talked in the early morning hours, under the stelly trees, and down by the river the birth singing to us, the flower sending us their sweet perfume, sun shining down upon us.

Mr. Outmore liked talking to me. He wave took broakfast with hady Culof and my the vory often came sing the morning to read to us as we sat in the shade of the great speads fees, he followed us always late. deawing room after dinner; he acc to the walks and drives Hole much pleasanter a house to When there is a sentionan to take an aterest in matterer" I said one day thoughtleasty to lady butmore. I res



" BO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?"

pented the words the moment I saw her lage grow pale. Cue morning titute and I were too sother amongst the roses. He plucked ne and save it to me; it was a lovely

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from He green leaves. "his you know what this means?" he I said "No." that I know nothing of

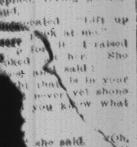
the language of flowers. You do not know what a moss some d symbolises" he questioned "From:

me to tex to find out." Was it the warm sunlight that day. sled my happy eyes? I could not look I took the resolved and ran ay shamofacedly.

CHASTION IX t ran against lady Culmore, t ale d to apologist. are you going in such a

she asked not knew," I replied know where you are going, Maw strange! perfectly true I only know Was Planting away from happle great that it dasoit me as do

ave of a burning son tacky (fullacked at me eagmostly I would given the world it I could have my face from her cuts. child," she said "what is this ! Sout Chest What is it Kato?" f peptled, trying guiltily



has brought swored, as I ran

that I should go oh of a "Langue d I read, "Moss-of love." Ah, me, hen, when I read out solomn awe a a shrine, Of ely that he loved ar rather that he me on such a son the delicious me vords came to me. He was one of the lovellest

FYFF SUCH. heautiful world? And then toy wind, came the memory Culmore, She had loved her and what was her reward? ered what she said when f of my prayer on Christmas , got brothes the warning, I on my precious resebud. I sver one small flower made so perfectly happy before ? saw tody Culmore the next hee was hale from excessive and I could not help wonderhat had passed between us respect bitter-awest memories

was every it had been the curious, constrained meal. hand and wife, the usual cheert iness on the part of the line it is in the part of the part of the frightness of

Howers, for the fresh needon.

restness about the estate, Lady Cul-

"Miss Forster," he said, "do no waste this beautiful evening indoors. Our host and hostess have both withdrawn. Let us enjoy the last rays of Will you come ?"

Would I? My heart went out to him in answer. Whither could he have led that I would not have followed?
"You will not need hat or cloak this kvety evening," he continued.

black shawl of Lady Culmone's lay on the couch. He wrapped it in spanish fashion around my head and

"I will show the flowers their queen, he said. "Let us leave the world, with all He cares and misories bohind us, Miss Forster, and go for an hour into

Where is fairy-land ?" I asked. "Wherever we like to make it," he replied. "We shall find ours near the

Shall I ever forget the scent of the magnotia, which was in full bloom, and filled the air with perfume? shall I ever forget the cry of the cushat dove the song of the nightgolden light on the water, the fair, blue sky, the scent of the blossoms we crushed beneath our feet?

Just where the magnotia-tree, with its great, white, scented flowers, stood, the lake formed a little bay. Lady Culmore, who had pretty fancies when the was not too miserable to entertain them, called it "Magnotia tray. I told Mr. Culmore this, and he smiled at the pretty conceit.

"We will make it our fairy-land," he

Such an hour comes only once in life; and it came, thank Heaven, then The water of the lake softly rippled and kissed the green banks; the wind stirred the magnolia blossoms. Far away stretched the russed brown hills, golden now in the light of the setting sun. My lover was silent for some minutes, then he took both my bands tooking at them earnestly. "You year no rings, Miss Porster,"

"I haven't any." I replied quickly Madame gave me my mother's wed-

ding ring; but it broke." "I wonder if you will think me very Fude if I make one comment?"

"I should never think you rude," I answered, "make what comment you might,"

"As you wear no engagement ring. I venture to conclude you are not en-Maned ?" "To be married, do you mean ?"

asked, in supreme wonder.

"Yes, to be married." he said.

"Oh, no! How could that be? have been at school all my life." "You have never had a lover ?" he

No. never." I answered. "I know it," he said. "Ah, Kate, no

pursued.



YOU WEAR NO RINGS, MISS PORSPER?"

a lover has looked into their depths ! Yours are as clear as the morning star. No lover has ever gazed into Kate, raise them to mine." But, instead of that, I buried my

face in my hands. The birds sang on, the wavelets broke tranquilty against the bank; but above the song and the ripple I heard the voice that held all the music of

thid you find out what the moss exclud symbolized? You must tell no. Did you find it out, Kate?" "Yes," I whispered, almost inaudi-

"I tovod you at first sight, Kate, he said. "You were sitting here by the loke who I saw you. You do not know will learn it quickly enough when you ero in the world of men. I could not ims sine who you were, for my brother had not told me of the new additin to his household; but I thought yu the teveliest girl I had ever seen; and Kate, in that first moment my heart went out to you, and it has never come back. I wanted to tell you this days ego, but I have healtated; you seemed so unconscious of it all. To trouble you with the cares of love seemed like breaking into some beautiful sanctuary; yet I do not see why I should not be happy, if I can. Kate, I love you, and I want you to be my wife.

That was the answer to my prayer "I love you so dearly, so well, Kate, that I will devote my life to you. Will you love me in return?"

t did-Heaven only knew how well But it occurred to me that it would be madness for him to marry me, I had nothing but what he was pleased to call my beauty and my loving heart. I had neither fortune, position nor connections, and I felt sure that all these were needful to him. I told him that he could not do a worse thing for himself. He laughed, and said that he was the best judge. He loved me, and nothing else was of con-

I did not tell him all-how I had loved him from the first moment I had heard his voice, Some few details 1 kept secret even from him. We plighted our troth by the side of the lakea troth that has not been broken, and never will be.

the wifet How little I dreamed that I should ever hear those words ! I had loved him with a love that was all humility.

"You delight my eyes just as you gladden my heart, Kate," said my lover, "It seems to me always as though you move to some sweet hidden You confess that you love ms. Kata 9 "Fee: I love you," I replied.

"And you promise to be my wife "Yes—if you really wish it."

ms kissed your lips—sweet as they are true! May I have the first kiss, Kate?" And there, in the glory of the even-ing sunset, my lover kissed me for the first time; and that kiss bound my

heart to him forever. The sun had set, leaving the water cold and gray, before we remembered how time was firing. The birds had all gone to rest, al lnature seemed to repose when we rose to return to the

"Never, 'Mr. Culmore' again, Kate," he said. "Mine is not a very melodious name, but you must try to use it. Say Ulrie' always when you speak to me." "Ifrie" I said, shyly, "do not tell anyone just yet. Let me grow ac-

"I will do as you wish, my darling." he said ,"but for a short time only." And then, although we were so near the house that any one could see us from the windows, he kiesed me again.

CHAPTER X.

"Kate," eried my lover impatiently, there are limits to human endur-"Very small limits they are!" I re-

torted. "You, Ulric, are the most impatient of men." The dark handsome face smiled.

"You do not mean it, Kate. If 1 thought you did-" "You shall not kiss me again, Ulrie; have made up my mind. Yesterday.

I am sure, the gardener saw you. "He may see me again to-day, if he likes!" laughed Ulric. "If a man may not kiss the girl whom he is going to marry, pray tell me whom he le to kiss? That was a problem I was unable

at the moment to solve. "Strange that we should both be thinking of the same thing! I was just about to tell you that human endurance has its limits, and that I shall not bear this kind of thing much

I knew very well that "this kind of thing" meant silence as to our engagement, but I was so unwilling to

It was a glorious morning at the end of June. My lover-heaven bless his handsome head and dark beautiful face -had come out to smoke a cigar under the chestnut trees. As a matter of e urse, I must go with him. Sir Rudelph had ridden over to Ulladale; Urio had eclined to accompany him. "We will have a little picinic of our

own Kate," he said: "I will have a eigar or two, you shall have some fruit, and we will improve the shin-It was absurd to resist, to make ex-

cuses-which I did by pocritically enough-for nothing on earth was so delightful to me as to be with him. "You forget," I said, "that I am Lady Culmore's companion." "I know that you are my com-

parion." he said: "and I shall not give you up either to Lady Culmore or to any one else." He arranged a most comfortable seat for me, and placed some fruit where I could easily reach it—rich ripe

strawberries and purple grapes. to sit still, Kate, look charming, and let me admire you. Do you know that you lookslike the morning itself? Your eyes are so bright, and you have the daintiest colors. Your hair-what dark hair it is. Kate !- all lies in rings and waves. Altogether, I am more in

kee than ever with my future wife" He knelt by my side, kissed my hands, klesed my lips, called me by every endearing name. I wondered for a moment whether he would always love me in this fashion, or whether c.ldness or estrangement would come to us as it had come to Sir Rudolph and Lady Culmore.

"You are thinking of something disagreeable, Kate; I know it by the ex-Pression of your face." I sighed.

"I will not have you sigh, dearest," said my lover. "Sighs must not pass such lips as yours lips made for smiles and kisses." "Ah, sweet sunny hours, sweeter

than words can tell, how quickly they passed, and how blissful they were "I am saying, Kate," continued UIric. " that I have come to the end of my endurance. To love you as I do, yet not to be at liberty to give full expression to that love, is torture. Last night, when you were singing, you looked so captivating that I could



"TWAS SAYING, KATE," CONTINUED GLERO "THAT I HAVE COME TO THE END OF MY ENDURANCE."

hardly refrain from taking you in my arms and kissing you." "It was well you did not," Isaid, wondering what Lady Culmore would have

thought. "You said, dearest, you wished me to keep silence about our engagement for a short time, because you wanted

to grow accustomed to it. Are you accustomed to it yet?" I raised my happy eyes to his face, and told him that the wonder of it was so great that, if I lived for a century, it would still be a source of supreme

astonishment to me. "Evidently, then, it is quite useless waiting any longer. Let me tell my brother his evening. My darling, I want to marry you in the autumn

went to marry you in the autumn. Are those tears in your eyes, Kate?"
"Yes, tears of foy," I replied. "I am so happy, Uirle—no girl in the wide world was ever happier; but I can not forget the misery that surrounds us. If I could see Lady Culmore less miserable, Sir Endolph more like you, I should not care. I know how it will be when we tell her; she will cry, or say some of those terrible things that one can not bear to hear, and Sir Rudolph will be colder than ever. Out here in the sunlight, where the waters shine, the roses bloom, and the whole world is lovely, it is easy to be happy and to talk of love, but in that

stadowed house, by that shadowed hearth, where husband and wife speak

His face grew grave, the laughter died from his eyes.
"I understand," he said, in a low

voice, "and I sympathize sincerely. Kate," he continued after a time, "I have never liked to speak to you about the matter, but what can possibly have parted those two? Do you know

enything about it?" "Nothing in the world," I replied "No one could know less." "Has the coldness existed ever since

"Yes; and it is that which makes me dislike to speak of my own happy "I have said nothing about it," contirued Ulric; "but I was never so shocked, so startled, so distressed in my life. The first night I spent here thought the coldness was only a

you have been here ?"

passing one-and even that horrifled me; but, when I saw that it was always the same, that nothing changed or softened it, I was bewildered. Do you know, Kate, that they were once the most devoted of lovers, that Rudolph was mad about her, and that she, so beautiful and graceful, was bught after everywhere? She rejected some of the best offers in England to marry Rudolph."

"And now he is tired of her?"

"No, that is not it. I have watched them closely-for I would do anything to bring about a different state of things-and have come to the coniusion that there is a secret between them, and that it concerns Nest." "Of what nature is the secret, do

you think, Ulric ?" I asked. "I read fear and shrinking in her face," replied my lover. "Evidently she has done something which has made her afraid of him. What it can be is a mystery to me. She is so gentle, so loving. I can not imagine that she would do anything wrong. I am sure it is a strong reason on his part that causes him to treat her in

this fashion." "I pity her the most," I said. "She loves him so dearly; her whole life seems to be a passion of love and pain." "And I," said Ulric, slowly, "pity him the most; I see in his face such an expression of torture. I know that he loved her so entirely that his heart must have been broken before matters came to this pass."

I told him how I had found her by the lakeside; her face buried in the grass, crying to Heaven for pardon -that it had been all for love of him. My lover was silent for some time after that.

"I seems a dishonorable thing." I sald, "to try to discover a secret that is evidently kept from one; but, if anything could be done to bring them together, or even to re-establish ordirary kindness and civility between them, it would be a good deed." Still, my lover, always so quick of

speech was silent. "Kate," he said, after a time, "are you sure that Lady Culmore used those words-'all for him'?" "Not once, but a hundred times," I replied. And then I saw that his face

had grown pale. "'All for him.' " he repeated. "That would imply that she admitted having done something wrong, but that it was for his sake.'

"That is what I have always thought, Ulric-that she did some urong to him." "What could she have done?" he continued, "She loves him too entirely

to have given a thought to any one "No, she has never betrayed him even by a thought," I said. Anl I saw the dark face grow pater.

"Kate," asked my lover, solemnly. have you ever tried to imagine what Lady Culmore could possibly have

"Never. She is truthful, or I might think that she had lied in some shameful way." "But what could she have lied about ?" asked Ulric. "There was no

mystery about their love or marriage;

and the lie must have been a shame-

ful one which could part them." "Candidly, Ulric, I have seen no fault in Lady Culmore except a too great love for her husband. To me her character seems perfect in every other respect. I believe she loves him mest devotedly. I thing she would do anything in the wide world for him. I can imagine that she might even mistake wrong for right for his sake. Nay, Ulric, I can go further; I believe that she loves him so entirely that she would do wrong for his sake

the master-passion of her nature." Ulric looked terribly distressed. "Why," I cried, "the shadow is streading to you. You look miserable.

and think it right. Love for him is

"A horrible idea," he replied-"a false one, I could swear, but so unutterably horrible that it has made me ill." He looked ill.

"Tell me what it is?" I requested.

"I can not, Kate. To save my life would not put into words the that has crossed my mind." Not only had his face grown white, but his hands trembled. I did not like to ask him any further questions.

He stamped his foot impatiently. "How foolish I am, Kate," he cried, "frightening myself with a scare-crow! I must have a terribly depraved mind for such an idea to cross it. That is the worst of my profession; we are always diving into motives. Kate, this

has spoiled our picnic. Let us forget

He spoke lightly; but it was in vain; he could not forget. I saw him shudder again and again. He rose from his seat, and paced up and down by the lakeside, his arms folded, his head bent, intense misery on his face. Truly our picnic was spoiled. I went to him at last, and laid my head upon

"I have a fit of the horrors. I am ashamed of myself. Tell me one thingmore. Justice is justice. Tell me, in alt her raving and her prayers, has Lady Culmore ever said anything about a little child?"

"Great Heaven," he said at last, "I whole heart and soul that I am right. Kate, it is all over with our picnic.

CHAPTER XI.

From that hour Ulric Culmore was a changed man. The blight, the shadow that lay over the others had spread now to him. He was silent, abstracted, and gloomy. At times he seemed to try hard to become his old genial self again, but the attempt always falled.

What was the mystery that bung over Ullamere, that seemed to blight every one it touched? Something about a little child; yet Lady Culmore had had no children, no little brothers and sisters. What could it be? It seemed useless thinking.

The change in my lover grieved me exceedingly. It was not that he loved mo less-I could see that-but that his mind was so preoccupied. He had been anxious that our engagement should be made public; now he never spoke of it. He had been anxious that we should be married in the autumn; now he never mentioned marriage. Yet I felt quite sure in my heart that it was not for want of love, nor because he loved me less. One morning-it was in the begin-

ning of July, and the tiger-lilies were all in bicom-he was standing in the perch, looking round him with certainly the saddest expression I had ever seen on his face. I went up to him and clasped both my hands round his arm. "You look so unhappy, Ulric," I

said. "You have never been yourself since the day of our picnic. What can I do to win back the smiles ?" "Bear with me, my darling," he

said, "until I have made up my mind what to do. Kate," he added suddenly, "you are one of the noblest



WENT UP TO HIM AND CLASPED BOTH MY HANDS ROUND HIS ARM.

and least mercenary of women. Has it occurred to you, that if my brother dies without children, the estate and

title come to me?" "No, I have not thought of it." "It is so," he raid sadly. "If no son be born to Rudolph, I shall be Sir Ulric Culmore."

He looked so grave, and he spoke so sadly, that I could not help say-

"You do not look very happy about it, Ulric." "I am not," he replied. "I-I fear there has been a great wrong done. m can I even say the words ?--if what I dread be true, I will take neither title nor estate. I would rather go out to the backwoods

and make a fortune there." "Shall you never tell me what it is Ulric ?" I asked. "It would serve no purpose, Kate, and would only imbitter your life," he replied. "You say rightly that I have not been the same man since the

thought came to me, and it would be as bad for you." "Are you always going to be miserable, gloomy and sad, Ulric ?" I ask-

"Not always, darling, I hope," he answered, with a sigh. "When shall you be your own self, Ulric? I love the old self the best. You were so bright, so happy and blithe. When will the Ulric I love come back again ?"

"When this terrible doubt is settled." he replied. "And when will that be be?" I ask-

He stood silent for some minutes, and then answered: "When I find courage to speak to my brother "

"When shall you find courage?" I pursued after a time. "I do not know, Kate; honestly speaking, I do not know. If I am correct in my terrible suspicion, then there is very little happiness for us in this world. If I am not correct, my brother will be so bitterly angry with me for the suspicion that he will never forgive mel. I must watch for my

opportunity, Kate," Later on that same day Sir Rudolph called him into the library, and showed him the plans for some alterations Brooke Hall. He related to me all that passed between them.

"Uric, come and look at these plans," said Sir Rudolph. "They came this merning from Millsom, in London. What do you think of them ?"

The brothers bent over the papers. Their opinions did not quite agree; Sir Rudolph liked one set, Ulric the other. "I shall choose these," said Sir Rudolph, pointing to the set that Ulric preferred. "No," laughed Ulric; "Brooke Hall

belongs to you. Rudolph, let the alterations be in accordance with your taste, not with mine." "True, Brooke Hall is mine, but I shall never live there. It will rever be home to me any more. I hate the place, and I intend never to enter it

"Hate Brooke Hall!" cried Ulric. Why, I thought you liked it?" "I did a short time since; I do not "How has the place displeased you,

Rudolph?"
Sir Rudolph's face darkened.
"That does not matter, Ulrie," he said. "I do not care about being questioned. In the natural course of things the Hall must come to you when I die." sense ! You will have sons and ghters of your own, Rudolph, I have no wish to succeed you. parcer is marked out for me, and I hope to make myself famous

Sir Rudolph laid both hands on Ulric's shoulders, and looked into his "We have loved each other truly, have we not, Ulric?" "Yes, and shall always do so," re-plied Ulric.
"Then take my word for it, brother, that no son or daughter of mine will ever succeed me. You will be Sir Ulric Culmore of Brooke; and I pray

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